Vindiciæ Fœderis:

OR

A Vindication of the INTEREST that the Children of Believers, as such, have in the Covenant of Grace, with their Parents; under the

GOSPEL-DISPENSATION

BEING

The Substance of Two Sermons, with Additions Preached to a Congregation in *Wapping.*

ALSO

Some seasonable Reflections upon various unsound, and Cruel Passages

Taken forth of two Furious Books of Mr. *H. Collins*, Printed against

Infants-Baptism,

By *FRAN. MENCE*, some time of *Pembroke* Colledge in *Oxford*, now an unworthy Pastor of a Church of Christ in *Wapping* near *London.*

Magna est veritas, & prævalebit.

LONDON, Printed for the Author, and are to be Sold by *John Lawrence* at the *Angel* in the *Poultrey*, by Mrs. *Mary Gurnel* in *Wapping-street* near *Bell Alley*, and Mr. *William Wingod* in *King-street* in *Wapping*, 1694.

UM

The Epistle Dedicatory.

To a Church of Christ in Wapping *near* London; *Grace, Mercy and Peace be Multiplied.*

I Could not (dearly beloved) but judge it my Duty, to Dedicate these Sermons unto you: partly, because you are my peculiar Care and Charge in the Lord, unto whom I do ow my Labour and Pains; and also by reason of that joint Request you were pleased to Attack me withall, *viz.* that they might be made Publick; giving me good assurance that they might be of great use for the good of Christians in this place. I have here (though it be against my own inclination) answered your desire; Let this undertaking be attended with your serious and solemn Prayer, that your hopes of good may be accomplished. What I have wrote in my Epistle to the Readers, many

of you can teſtifie, you well know what a long time of Silence I have had; how deſirous I was to live in peace; that alwaies being eſteemed a Jewel of great price with me, hoping that the duſt that hath been raiſed to the darkening of the Air among us, might have fallen without any attempt of mine to ſuppreſs it; but the violent effort of the Pulpit, and the furious Reports of the Preſs, have ſomething awakened me from that eaſe and quiet, I ſhould have been glad longer to have ſolaced my ſelf withall: But alas it was time to be ſomething alarmed, when the flames were inkindled about us, and our little Field in danger of being conſumed, here is one that hath put this place even into a Conflagration. I ſhall (I doubt not) fall under the laſh of many cenſuring Tongues, for this ſmall endeavour, to vindicate this one exploded (though precious) Truth of Chriſt. You have had experience of my ſpirit and deportment, and cannot from the ſtricteſt

obſervations you have made of me, but ſay, that ſo far as may be, I have been willing to live in peace with all men, and what care I have taken to preſerve peace in the midſt of and round about you. It would be matter of much comfort to me, may this little Eſſay be inſtrumental to reduce this place into ſomewhat a more ſedate and calm temper: My Practice (ever ſince the Lord was pleaſed to call me amongſt you) hath been to give perpetual demonſtrations that I live, and can walk with all that are ſound in the Faith, and of an unblameable Converſation. I found you fixed upon that Noble, Evangelical Foundation, which I have endeavoured to build upon. Your laudable Principle is, that Union with Chriſt, is the great ground of our Communion one with another; let us magnifie God, for what we have found of his Gracious Preſence and Bleſſing, ſince we came together, and ſtand in that relation as we do one to the other. I do with

much importunity request your Prayers, that I may daily have a remembrance from you at the Throne of rich Grace: Watch against all designs of men that lye in wait to deceive, and to disturb our peace: Study much the Covenant of Grace, blessed be the Lord that he hath not only ingrafted you, but also your Seed into it. You that have Children, plead the Promises of the Covenant with God for them: Take heed of such Principles, that do inevitably exclude your dear Babes out of the Kingdom of God, and render their Salvation (provided they expire in their infancy) not only improbable, but in any ordinary way impossible. Beg the Lord to put a stop, and to give a Check to that lying malicious spirit, that like a spiteful Ghost walks in this poor disturbed spot. I doubt not, but what I have here transmitted from the Press, will be attended with the same opprobrious Censure it met withal from the Pulpit; many ignorant and rash

raſh hot-headed Profeſſors did ſeverely judge me, and my Sermons, that never heard them; and ſo I do expect many will that ſhall never read them, pour out their profound invectives againſt them. I muſt expect no better quarter, than honeſt Mr. *Giles Shute*, who by many was caſt and condemned, that never read his Books, neither were able to paſs a right Judgment upon them. I do heartily wiſh, that a greater number of my *Anabaptiſt* Neighbours, would labour more after the life and power of Religion; and Study to know their own hearts better: then I promiſe my ſelf they would not be ſo prompt, and ready to undervalue and condemn others, as they be. I cannot but admire to ſee what a change is upon their ſpirits, words, and actions: in our late times of reſtraint they could be glad (many of them) to partake of my poor pains, and ſometime ſince; but I do not ſo much wonder at them, as at their Teacher, who ever ſince the laſt

breaking forth of our Liberty, hath ſo much inveighed againſt all that are not of his opinion, and hath laid ſo much ſtreſs and weight upon his Notion, about Baptiſm, that hath diſtilled ſuch bitterneſs into the ſpirit of many, that they be turned very ſowre and moroſe, to thoſe that cannot imbibe their Sentiments. I bleſs the Lord, that I can ſay, I have not been the Incendiary among us; I lay ſtill Six or Seven years till all was (from Pulpit and Preſs by Mr. *Collins*) put into Flames about us: It is next to a wonder to me that any ſhould be ſo impudent, as to accuſe me to be the Author of all the trouble that doth annoy us, notwithſtanding my long ſilence, and that little oppoſition that yet I have made againſt a turbulent ſpirit: that he might diſcover the uttermoſt of his bitterneſs, I muſt have him ſeveral times, to pronounce in his Pulpit before all his Congregation, an open Challenge againſt me: I do expect that ſo ſoon as theſe Sermons,

mons, ſhall have an acceſs to his hands, that we ſhall hear ſufficiently of his tumultuous ſpirit: I have made a few remarks (as you may ſee) upon his bold and undigeſted Doctrine, raſhly and ignorantly thruſt forth into the World; giving you but a few Gleanings, to that Harveſt, I may (if occaſion be offered) preſent you withall. I make no queſtion, but my challenger will quickly fill our Ears with his Anſwers, be it ſo, the Lord (I hope) will enable us to make our reply: I deſire that he would remember, the nature of his Challenge, that it was a ſingle Duel, without propounding any Seconds, that he hath engaged me in. Stand faſt in the Lord (my dearly beloved) as ye have received the Lord Jeſus, ſo walk ye in him, as ye have received how ye ought to walk, ſo walk at all times, and abound yet more and more; while ſome, and that not a few, are crying up an Opinion not neceſſary to Salvation; let your Zeal run out

after those Truths of the Gospel in the believing, and practising whereof, you may obtain Salvation, and greatly rejoyce in the day of our Lord Jesus. Love one another; pity and pray one for the other; live in peace and love; and the God of Love and Peace shall dwell with you. Finally, my Brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; I commend you to God, and the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified; that he in order thereunto, would be pleased to fulfil all the good pleasure of his Goodness within you, and the work of Faith with power, is the hearty desire of him, that is

Your Servant for Christ's sake,

Fran. Mente.

The EPISTLE

To the Candid and Impartial

READERS,

Especially those unto whom the following Sermons were Preached.

WE live in a day, and Age of Wonders, in which the Divine Providence, produceth many strange things; behold here is presented unto your eyes, the substance of two poor Sermons with considerable enlargement, that are expos'd (through great importunity) to the open light in the World. I have been very averse to contribute to the grieved and groaning Press, that is overcharg'd by such Writings, which were only fit (after they have been utter'd in the Pulpit) to be adjudg'd to the perpetual Grave of Oblivion; such I readily confess are these Sermons, and deserve no better Censure: It is a Prodigy to my self, that I should be prevail'd upon, to suffer these Papers to appear with an open face, and to be expos'd to the view of many. I sensibly, and feelingly find cause every day, more and more, to bewail, and to blush at my own ignorance and incapacity, for the work of the Ministry, though I have

not been vacant of many Solicitations, accompany'd with the Tears of serious Christians, that I would admit some of my Labours to be Printed: But at the same time a cold damp hath seiz'd my Spirits, from a deep conviction of my insufficiency for such an undertaking; judging it to be my Duty, to be like the Deaf Adder, not to hearken to such Charms, but to be inexorable: You may then demand, how comes it to pass, that these two Sermons have obtain'd more than all the rest ever could?

I have not only consider'd the Importunity of dear friends, (I did formerly withstand) which of it self could never have prevail'd; but am fallen under a Conviction, that the providential Call of my Lord and Master doth oblige me, by reason of the great dishonour, that is brought to his most sacred and pure Name, from various infamous Doctrines, that have been divulged amongst us; and that with such heat and fervor, that we are upon this little spot in an Inflammation, yea near unto a Conflagration; insomuch that out of consciousness of Duty, and the importunity of those whose hearts do bleed within them, I could forbear no longer, but went unto the Sanctuary, to fill my shallow Bucket, with some of the cooling and quenching waters, that issue from under the Threshold thereof. Oh! that there might be a blessing attending this my

Essay;

Essay; we are so set on fire round about us, (by a man of a vehement Spirit) that seems to threaten all about him, opposite to his Principle, quickly to be consum'd and reduc'd to ashes; God be pleas'd, graciously to allay his heat, and quench his false fiery Zeal.

It is well known, that for six or seven years, I have born with his unparallell'd Confidence, in his frequent inveighing against Infants-Baptism, with many insufferable reflections upon us that are in judgment and practice different from him. He hath, (besides his frequent Excursions) an anniversary day, (ex proposito) to batter us with his Rams to the ground. A long time we have made no resistance against him, (as many of you that attend upon my Ministry well know) but have patiently receiv'd the furious fire of his Broadsides: Good Christians have repair'd unto me, begging me to lift up the Standard of Gods Word against him; but my reply to them was, Wisdom should rest in the Bosom of some, and that I knew not how short-liv'd (considering the various Threatnings of a Divine Providence, for a multitude of crying Sins that abound among us; particularly the animosities and dissentions of the Professors of the Gospel) our present enjoyments might be; adding, that I judg'd the Will of my Lord was, that I should improve that little Talent he hath pleas'd to intrust me withal, (to the

utmost

utmost of my power) in preaching upon the weighty and most necessary Truths of the Gospel, whereby (through Grace) I might save my self, and those that hear me, 1 Tim. 4. 16. *Some of his followers waxed bold, looking upon what he delivered, to proceed out of the mouth of an infallible Oracle, crying out of me, why doth he not answer Mr. C. and preach up his sprinkling of Infants; if he had any thing to say, he would not be silent. Yea, some have been so impudent, as to say, that what he doth, as to the baptizing of Infants, is against the light of his own Conscience: To such bold Accusers and Boasters, I shall only return in the words of the Apostle,* Rom. 14. 4. Who art thou that judgest another mans servant? to his own Master he standeth or falleth.

It is common amongst us, for those that understand not the right hand from the left in any great point of the things of God, to judge and condemn the most judicious and pious, that are not of their Measures about Baptism; let but a man renounce his Baby sprinkling (as they scornfully call it) and pass under the Water, he is an excellent Christian. If some of their Preachers be never so raw, crude and illiterate, and can lay about them with abundance of Confidence, though mingled with a great quantity of Nonsense, yet they are admir'd by them being for dipping, without which

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what is all the Learning, Experience, Piety, Pains, and sincere endeavours of faithful Ministers in serving souls? It may grieve any one that hath a serious consideration of the worth of Souls, and the weightiness of the work of the Ministry upon his Heart, to hear, how all that those deliver, that decry the Baptizing of Infants, is magnified, as flowing from the Spirit of the Lord, though much that is vented, is but the apparent (proles) or off-spring of Pride, Ignorance and Confidence. Oh! let not my soul enter into their Secrets: who is sufficient for these things? I wish that there be not only contempt heaped upon the Word of the Lord and his Ministry, but also blasphemy upon the Spirit. Let men take heed of being too bold in fathering their passionate Sallies, and Invectives against their Betters, upon the Holy Ghost. Oh! that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for these things!

To compleat all, the high place in the Congregation is not sufficient to discharge the conception of the stomach against us, but the Press must also groan to bring forth, that there may nothing appear but dung and filth upon our faces, and all the beauty of Religion, and Evangelical Order of the Gospel we walk in, may be totally defac'd. From the Press hath been sent into the midst of us, two Pamphlets, like unto Sampson's Foxes that were join'd in

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the Tail with fire-brands betwixt them to burn down all our Field; as if nothing less than the total destruction of our Vineyard could suffice. With what care must these Prints immediately be disperst into all quarters? not only at the publick Meeting House, the Booksellers Shops, but some of them must be sent up and down in blank Papers to several Persons by the Penny-Post, and others carry'd to Coffee-Houses, and openly laid upon the Tables, that every one that comes to take a Pipe and drink a Dish, might feast upon and admire this none-such Author, and not only the sober, but the wet Drinkers should be baptized into his opinion. These Books (such as they are) must be diligently in all places scatter'd, that if it be possible every hand might be furnisht with a tool and weapon to beat and cut us all into pieces: what a spirit is this man possest with? as if he would be a common troublesome Ghost to haunt every house and heart, near unto him? Surely we are greatly ingag'd, for our peace, and quiet, (by all lawful means) to do all that we can to lay him; for it is he that hath been the great troubler of our Israel. I do sincerely desire him in the cool time of his spirit, provided, when his eyes are opened, he doth ever enjoy such a season, solemnly to consider the description that the wisest of men doth give of a publick annoyer, Prov. 26. 18. When I first cast mine eyes upon his Books, I could not but admire

mire them for Pride, Ignorance and Confidence, never yet saw I any thing since I was able to hold a book in my hand for these qualifications so excellent; this hath been the opinion of many, that have been much more able to judge, than ever he will be to write.

I shall briefly tell you, what was my vehement provocation and prevailing inducement to preach the following Sermons, vid. *his audacious cruelty in his Book, offer'd to our Children, to the Seed of all that have the singular priviledge of being in Covenant with the Lord. He could not in his writings content himself (as many of his Brethren do) only to exclude them from their right to Baptism, but must proceed upon such wayes, and means, that do inevitably shut them out of the Kingdom of Heaven, if so be they expire in their infancy,* Hinc illæ Lachrymæ! *What pious and tender Parent, that hath a serious concernment upon his heart, for the eternal state of his Child, can hear such Doctrine, and his ears not to tingle, and his heart not to tremble?*

I confess, to have such wild and cruel Doctrine to be not only deliver'd, but lick'd up and admir'd amongst us (as if it was one of the choicest Truths of Grace, that our Lord and Master sends his Ambassadors to proclaim) did cause a little zeal for Truth to wax warm within me, and engaged me to draw up some cautions against, and make some mild reflecti-

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ons upon such Infant-destroying matter: therefore when I preach'd (as the Lord did inable me) concerning a sound and saving knowledge of Christ in the use of this truth; I did blame some that were chiefly concern'd about other knowledge, little respecting this; adding, That there was such a knowledge of Christ, as to the object of it, but was not that which was most necessary to Salvation, as for instance, that of Baptism, as to the subject of it. Thus I gently deliver'd my self, saying, that there be some Pulpits that reek with a blind Zeal against Infant-baptism; but pray take notice, that what I am going to speak is neither for, nor against the baptizing of Infants, only I cannot but take notice of a Pamphlet, lately risen up in the midst of us, that in its decrying Infants-baptism, does proceed upon such Mediums, that must unavoidably shut those that dye in their Infancy out of Heaven, and so a terrible sentence of condemnation is denounc'd against them all: this bold Writer doth presume to lay it down as one of his infallible positions, that no Infants are in Covenant with their Parents that are Believers, nor capable of habitual Faith, one great branch of Sanctification, and the new Creature, indispensably necessary to Salvation. This he is so confident of, that in a scornful way, he doth rank that odious Doctrine of Antichrist, Transubstantiation, with Infants being in Covenant with

their

their Parents, and their being capable of habitual Faith; it seems they be all of the same import with him: He being sensible what a foundation he hath laid to build the perdition of Infants upon, that he might lick this ill-shapen Monster into some pleasing shape, acquaints us, that he hath found out a way to save Children notwithstanding: One would wonder what this curious invention should be, it is this, viz. *those Children that shall be saved, shall so be by an imputed righteousness; thus we see, what it is to be a sagacious Divine. I believe all the brains of the dull Schoolmen, could never find out such an exquisite notion, as this topping Preacher hath not only to send our poor Infants by swarms to Hell, but also can recall them and reverse the doom that he hath denounc'd against them, as if the power of Life and Death were in his hands: The worst of it is, here is nothing to prevail upon us to imbibe his new invented way, but his own Authority; his* ipse dixit, *will not satisfie thinking men, tho' it may go smoothly down with his own admirers.*

That Caution given to us about false Teachers, Gal. 1. 8. *cannot but stick with me; I am certain here is another Gospel, and that in a substantial point of our Religion, and Articles of Faith. I confess (in the hearing of many of you) I did say upon this unscriptural Notion, what I see no reason as yet to retract, that to talk of an imputed Righteousness, without a Covenant of Grace, & without an imparted Righteousness, was but Mountebank Divinity. I understand it to be*

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the judgment of all our Divines, that Justification, and Sanctification, tho' different in their Nature and use yet are never separate as to their subject; for those whom God doth justifie, them also he doth sanctifie, neither do I understand how without a Covenant of Grace, we can be made partakers of either of them: but here is an incomparable man, that can divide these great blessings, and can make Infants happy with one, tho' they are not capable of the other; ay, and that notwithstanding they be not in the Covenant of Grace with their Parents. I wonder where my good neighbour learnt this Doctrine; he is such a Professor of Divinity, as that he hath made a Catechism, which he hath dispers'd among his Disciples, I have not yet seen it, but fear, when I shall obtain a sight of it (as now I do intend) I shall scarce find him more excellent, and sound, than what was the product of that judicious Assembly that sat at Westminster; *alas they could find out no such way as here is presented unto us, of condemning and absolving Infants: to mention this Mountebank Divinity with caution and tenderness, was all that I did presume to do for many years; I thought at this, no well temper'd and sober mind could suffer a recoil, considering my long and many provocations. But what a noise did this make? What a dust did this raise? Nay, into what a frisk did this put our admir'd Author? How was he nettled? that any of his Doctrine should, (that was much admir'd by such that were just as able to judge, as he to write) be call'd into question: Notwithstanding all that was said, neither his venerable name, nor either of his Books was so much as mention'd, that which was spoke, did not carry any direct opposition to his Believers Baptism (as he calls it;) yet he (as if he was the only Soveraign upon this Spot, and was in-*

vested

vested with a despotick power, taking upon him to rule as with an absolute Authority) was put into a terrible commotion and convulsion; and many of his Devotaries were prejudicially possest, as if some great Treason had been committed against their Ruler and Guide: Why, but what is the matter? A poor man that lay bury'd for six or seven years in the Grave of patience and silence, upon whom they had long trampled, and over whom they had long insulted, the top-mould of his Grave did a little discernibly move, and what shall we do, provided there should be a Resurrection? Oh! how were all hands (tongues) called to help? How must the mouth of the grave be diligently watch'd that he creep not forth? lest our tottering foundation be disquieted, our high-tower'd magnificent Structure be shaken, our direful Principles about dying Infants be detected and disprov'd, and the fatal Sentence that we have pronounc'd be revers'd; Little can any one suppose or conceive what a tumult was rais'd from so small an alarm, all must be upon the defence; but with what Weapons must that be made? Out of what Forge or Mint must they come? Surely out of that Infernal One of Hell; that which I must be accosted withal at the first Onset must be Lyes, as if nothing else was their Armour of Proof, and Weapons of Defence. It is wonderful that so many of those, that would be thought the most Excellent, if not the only *People of God amongst us, should themselves give us their true* Etymology, *and discover what* Lineage *and* Stock *they be of, the Lord help them to consider, who is the Father of Lyers, and whose Children they are that make Lyes; Is this consonant with the description that is given of Gods Children?* Isa. 63. 8. For he said, Surely they are my people, children that

will

will not lie. *Let those that would be thought the greatest* Inhabitants *of the* New Jerusalem, *and to have their* Names *wrote in the* Lamb's Book of Life, *be careful they do not deceive and expose themselves by this Sin to a fearful Exclusion,* Rev. 21. 27. *I have a* Black Catalogue *of Lyes committed to Writing, which I had thought at this Time to have presented you withall, but forbear till another season. I should have been very glad not to have been concern'd in this controvertie, but since I have suffer'd such a violent arrest out of my grave of durance and silence, where I should have been glad to have rested all my dayes, and finding my Pillow to be extreamly uneasie, being stufft with piercing and pricking thorns; I could not but offer this little Testimony for the Truth I am contending for. When I did discourse in my Pulpit about the Covenant state of Infants with their Parents, I did not intend that what was deliver'd should ever fall under the weight of the Press; what hath been spoken hath not been altogether destitute of a Blessing (through grace) unto many that heard it: the next Sabbath after my undertaking in this affair, my good neighbour (that he might shew the rancour of his Spirit) produc'd in his Pulpit a Paper against me, which he read in his Congregation, at the tail of which he discover'd his sting, which was an open challenge that he pronounc'd against me, to dispute me openly, either in his, or my Meeting-House; thus the Gantlet (I do not say the Club) was cast; the same week he did disperse abroad that upon the next Lords day, he would preach upon my Text, and confute me. I had thought to have acquainted you what an excellent confuter he is (having his confutation Sermons by me taken from his mouth, by the Pen of a ready Writer:) but upon*

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second thoughts, I shall suspend that until another occasion be offer'd. This Champion that he might triumph in his most triumphant and stately Chariot, hath published another Challenge against me in his Pulpit, after he had (as he judg'd) confuted my Doctrine about the Covenant. If it had been any of my Brethren that he had thus confuted and challenged, I should have wondered what manner of Spirit this Man had been of; one would have thought that if he had had any True Call *to the Ministry, (which many question) the consideration of his Education might have something suppressed the proud Elation of his Mind, which in these Things doth eminently and too apparently discover it self, and that he might not have thought himself to have been a Star of the First Magnitude. I remember I have read of a King that was advanced to the Throne from a mean Descent and Calling, being a Potter by Trade, that the Canker of Pride might not approach nor corrupt the Royal Diadem, would have all his Provisions for his Table serv'd with Earthen Vessels, that so he might frequently have such an Object in his Eye, that might keep him humble. I shall leave my good* Friend *and* Antagonist *to make the Application. I have oftentimes thought in my grieved and sorrowful silence, that if it had pleased the Divine Providence to have placed some of my* Anabaptist *Brethren (whom my Soul loveth dearly) in this Mans* Post; *we might have dwelt like Brethren, might have taken sweet Counsel, and have walked unto the House of God together, yea, might have carried on the Work of the Lord with one Hand, one Shoulder, and one Heart. I can* (Christian Readers) *truly say, that what I have here put into your Hands to read in the following* Sermons *is wrote and designed for the*

Honour

Honour of God, the Grace of his Covenant, to interpose a little between our poor Children and Little Ones, and that Soul-amazing Doom that is pronounced against them, to reprove the rash and furious Zeal of our Adversary, *to Answer the vehement Importunities and longing Expectations of many of my good* Friends, *to commode all that hear me, in instructing them in this great and comfortable* Truth *of the Gospel that I contend for, to give a check to that Lying Spirit that is got loose among us, to satisfie any that are stumbling and doubting about Baptism, and to reduce (if the God of Peace shall see good) this poor troubled Place to a peaceable tranquil Composure. Oh! cry to God, that this my Undertaking, sincerely prostituted to the good of Souls, may meet with some suitable Blessing thereunto, and that all my poor Labours in the Work of the Gospel, may obtain good success. The Lord be with you, and bless you, and cause his gracious Face to shine upon you, guiding you into the Way of Truth, and conducting you to his Eternal Glory: My Hearts desire and prayer for you all is, that you may be saved. I am*

Your Affectionate Servant

in Christ,

Fran. Mence.

A Vindication of the Intereſt of the Children of Believers in the Covenant of Grace, &c.

ACTS ii. 39.

For the promiſe is to you, and to your children.

IN this Chapter we have one of the firſt Sermons that was preached after the Aſcenſion of Chriſt: The very firſt that we read of, unleſs we take *Peter* his divine Oration in the Chapter before concerning the apoſtacy of *Judas*, and the chooſing of another in his room to fill up the Number of the Diſciples, to be the firſt. This indeed is a moſt excellent Sermon, and of divine inſpiration, in which the holy Scriptures refering to that caſe, were elegantly, and opportunely explicated, and applyed; and the Auditory that he directed himſelf unto ſweetly compoſed, and inſtructed in the Election of another Apoſtle, to fill up the room of him that betrayed his Lord and Maſter, who through the inſufferable anguiſh of his own Conſcience, was a moſt execrable Executioner of himſelf, and by the juſt judgment of God had his bowels burſt out, *Acts* 1.15, *&c.* We come unto the Chapter which my Text is part

of, in which we may observe four general parts.

First, The Mission of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, who according to the promise and command of Christ were to wait at *Jerusalem*, for the accomplishment of that rare and necessary blessing, to fit them for that great and difficult undertaking of preaching and planting the Gospel they were commissionated unto, who were to go together and not enter upon this great work, until the Spirit did rest upon them. *Ver.* 1. *&c.* we have their obedience to their Lords command, *chap.* 1. 13, 14. There is one thing very observable, that when the Apostles, and those that were with them, were with one accord waiting for the fulfilling of the promise, they did not sit dumb, and silent together; but they did pour out prayer, and supplications to God, they did not keep such a silent meeting, waiting for the Spirit, as the *Quakers* pretend to do: They were not only waiting but praying, it may be well supposed, that they were making supplications to God, for the obtaining that promised mercy they were under the expectation of.

Secondly, The Sermon that *Peter* (by divine assistance) did deliver to the Congregation that was about him. His Auditory was very great; no wonder it was so, partly because of the time of it: Here was a great Season that might contract a numerous Assembly, it was in the time of *Pentecost*, when there was a great resort of people from many places; and also because of that wonder that was then wrought in the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, which enabled them to speak in various languages, *ver.* 4, 5. When this extraordinary thing was noised abroad, it brought the Multitude together, some were confounded, others were amazed, and there were those that mocked; they thought the Apostles were full of New Wine, as if their speaking through

through the Gift of the holy Spirit so miraculously poured upon them, was only the fruit and effect of their excessive drinking. Thus we may observe how Satan doth instigate those that be under his conduct and influence, to blaspheme the most wonderful and obvious Works of God, *ver.* 6, 7, 8, *&c.* In this Sermon the Apostle *Peter* undertakes two things.

1. To wipe off that foul Aspersion, that was cast upon them, of being filled with New Wine. It was very needful for him so to do, otherwise this might be a means to obstruct the good success of his Sermon: We may see in many *Verses* the way the Apostle takes to clear them of this Diabolical Accusation, from *ver.* 14, to 22.

2. He comes to the peculiar Subject the Spirit of Christ did lead him unto, *viz.* To set home upon the Consciences of the *Jews*, their great and sanguinary Sin in their cruel and malicious crucifying and murdering the Lord Jesus, the Prince of life, the only Messiah and Saviour of the World. Many of those that heard him were guilty of it, as we may see by the round and positive charge, he draws up against and fastens upon them, *verse* 22, 23. Here we may apprehend, how fully and emphatically the Apostle doth fix this Crime upon his Hearers, as to him that was barbarously murdered and crucified; therefore he called him *Jesus of Nazareth*, to shew that he was the true Messiah, promised by all the Prophets, and that they might readily understand that he spake of that very *Jesus*, whom they in scorn and contempt called *Jesus of Nazareth*, and upon whose Cross they fixed that Title; the Apostle to make the charge the more full, he adds that it was that *Jesus of Nazareth*, that was a Man approved of God among them by Miracles, Wonders and Signs, which God did by him, and that in the midst of them, as they themselves well

knew: It was him that they did take, and by wicked hands did crucifie and ſlay. It is to be obſerved, that this terrible Accuſation is exhibited againſt all the Auditory of *Peter*, when he ſaith unto all that heard him, Ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and ſlain, he might deliver himſelf thus unto them all, becauſe in ſo great a company, many were preſent that actually poured out the blood of Chriſt: Moreover the whole People cried out at the Tribunal, crucifie him, crucifie him, and imprecated, that his blood might be upon them, and their poſterity, *viz.* the guilt of his blood, and the direful fruits of it.

What a wonderful Spirit of Zeal and Courage, was the Lord pleaſed to fill this Apoſtle withal? Even him, who out of fear ſometime before had denied his Lord and Maſter; he was now full of the Spirit of the Lord, which is a Spirit of might and ſtrength, that did animate and ſupport him. One would think that this bloody Congreſs, that were skilful in, and ſcarce cool from the effuſion of blood, yea of the beſt of blood, would immediately have diſpatched him and emptied his Veins.

That the Apoſtle might faſten their execrable ſin upon their conſciences, in murdering the Meſſiah, he doth (from the Word of God) prove him to be ſo. He did not only propound his aſſertion, but he proved it, that ſo he might involve his hearers, into a full and through conviction. This doth evidently inſtruct thoſe, that take upon them to preach the truths of Chriſt, to prove them, and to be able to defend them.

The Suitable mediums and arguments, the Apoſtle inſiſts upon to prove this his Doctrine, concerning Chriſt, as how God raiſed him from the dead, and concerning *David* a tipe of him, I muſt

not

not ſtand to ſhew, but muſt come to the next general part I obſerve in this Chapter.

Thirdly, The good effects and gracious fruits of this the Apoſtles Sermon. After he had fixed the charge he drew up againſt the *Jews* for murdering the Meſſiah, whom he proved to be ſo, then he comes with a ſharp arrow of application, and ſtrikes it deep (by the efficacy of the holy Spirit) into the hearts of his ſinful Auditors, *ver.* 36. *therefore let all the houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly, that God hath made the ſame Jeſus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Chriſt:* He told them how eminently he was exalted by God, whom they had vilified and abaſed unto the greateſt contempt and ſhame, and had put him to the moſt painful, ſhameful and curſed death, that ever could be.

Oh! to deal thus with the Son of God, the Lord of all, the only Meſſiah ſo highly exalted at the right hand of the Majeſty on high, and made both Lord and Chriſt, what a cut might this be to thoſe that heard the Apoſtle, being guilty of ſo great ſin, of ſuch Scarlet impieties? *Tunc ingens eſt ſtimulus, quo Petrus mirâ libertate et ſinceritate, pupugit corda Judæorum.* See and behold, what wickedneſs ye have committed, the guilt of what blood you have contracted: what maliciouſly and cruelly to murder the Lord Jeſus, the Saviour of the world, who is the Lord of all, who is over all, God bleſſed for ever!

This had by the bleſſing of the moſt high gracious effects and fruits upon thoſe that heard him.

Firſt, They were pricked at the heart, they were troubled and grieved at their heart, becauſe of their horrid ſin they had committed in their deteſtable murder of Chriſt. *Doluerunt animis, quod crucifixiſſent Chriſtum.* Piſca. Ver. 37.

Secondly, They ask *Peter*, and the reſt of the Apoſtles, what they ſhould do? *ver.* 37. Now they were brought into a miſerable plunge, the

bloudy colour of their sin, and their Consciences boiling hot within them, pronouncing fiery Sentences against them, the very sting of the damned was crucifying them; this might well make them as amazed, and confounded rebels to cry out, what shall we do? what course shall we take, to get free from the charge of this crying sin? no sooner were these poor wretches convinced, and begged councell of the Apostles as to their escaping that dreadful wrath that was due unto them for their greatly meritorious sin; but *Peter* gives them suitable advice, directing them how they might obtain eternal Salvation, by the bloud of him whom they had wickedly crucified and slain, as in *ver.* 38. he doth exhort and direct them, to repent, to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, that they might receive remission of sin, and the gift of the holy Ghost; then they may be well assured, that through him whom they crucified, they should obtain a discharge from their soul-confounding guilt, and eternal Salvation. I shall proceed no further in the parts of this Chapter, neither shall I add any thing more as to the happy effects and events of the Apostle's most excellent Sermon, in the hearts and lives of these wonderful converts, that heard him, who though never so wicked before, were the *primitiæ evangelij*, shewing the glorious efficacy of the sufferings of Christ, that those that were his inveterate enemies, and did so insatiably thirst for his pure and spotless bloud, that nothing could satisfie, but their washing their hands in the same by a violent effusion, should partake of the first fruits of it.

The Apostle discerning, what a miserable condition they saw themselves to be in, and into what a direful abiss of divine wrath they apprehended themselves to be swallowed up, he does not only nakedly call upon them to repent and turn to God, and to fly unto him for mercy; but gives

unto

unto them one of the most gracious Motives and incouragements thereunto, telling them the promise is unto them, and their Children. He did well understand, that their horrible sin did not only extend unto them, but also unto their offspring; for they had not only poured out the sacred bloud of Christ themselves, but also had involved their Children in the guilt of it, *Mat.* 27. 25. When *Pilate* had said I am innocent of the bloud of this Person, see ye to it, then answered all the people, and said, his bloud be on us, and our Children. Surely a lively sense of this, made a deep wound in their Consciences. To relieve and support them in this miserable plunge, when they could not but see the wrath of a just revenging God, ready to invade both them, and their Children, they could not but be in a deplorable case, saying, we have eternally destroyed and ruined both our selves and posterity: The Apostle presents them with a Plaister broad enough for their Sore; *q. d.* well though your sin be so grievous and damnable as to your selves and little ones, yet repent, and turn to God, and it shall be happy both with you, and your Children also: for said he, the promise is to both, and will reach you, and your dying infants; you shall not be cast out of Covenant, but you, and your little ones shall continue in the same, that you were in before the actual exhibition, and death of your Saviour, whom ye did impiously crucifie and slay. Oh what a full breast of consolation was here, from the infinite grace of God exposed for these miserable creatures to suck and hang upon! the very marrow and quintessence of the Gospel is proposed to them, for their effectual inducement to repent and believe. Here was the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, in which these poor trembling sinners might wash and bathe their guilty and filthy Souls; these were those that

now look upon him whom they had pierced, and did mourn over him, as one mourneth for his only Son, and they were in bitterneſs for him, as one that is in bitterneſs for his firſt born, *Zech.* 12. 10. *Peter* gave them ſuch a Cordial, that could not but greatly refreſh and comfort them; here he was like to his bleſſed Lord and Maſter, the good *Samaritan* that had compaſſion on him that fell among thieves, and was wounded, who went to him, and bound up his wounds pouring in oyle and wine, that ſo he might both cleanſe and cure.

Now we come to fix upon the words of our Text: That we may ſee clearly, what is intended in them, let us obſerve a few particulars by way of general diviſion that are comprehended in them.

Firſt, To whom this is ſpoken; it was to the *Jews*, who were then met together out of many Nations at the Feaſt of *Pentecoſt*, *ver.* 5. *and there were dwelling at Jeruſalem Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven.* Some of theſe, nay many of them, were effectually touched at the heart by the penetrating Sermon of *Peter*, or rather by the irreſiſtible compunction of the Spirit of God, cooperating with the preaching of *Peter*, as it was at another time, when this excellent Apoſtle was preaching, *Acts* 10. 44. *While Peter yet ſpake theſe words, the holy Ghoſt fell on all them that heard the word.* When the holy Ghoſt doth fall upon the heart, and into the heart of thoſe that hear; the word then (the power and authority of it) ſhall be found, and that by the moſt perverſe and obſtinate ſinner: it is he that makes the *word to be quick, and powerful, and ſharper than any two-edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit, and of the joints and marrow, and to be a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, *Heb.* 4. 12.

Secondly,

Secondly, By whom they were ſpoken; *Viz.* by *Peter*, in the name of all the reſt of the Apoſtles. It pleaſed the Lord at this time, and upon this occaſion, to conſtitute him to be the mouth of all, he was great in utterance, it is very probable the reſt of the Apoſtles might be willing to chuſe him to be their Spokeſman. However the Spirit of the Lord did order it, that it ſhould be ſo, that *Peter* ſhould be the man, that ſhould preach this excellent Sermon, all the Apoſtles were concerned in it, and did even ſpeak in and with him, *ver.* 14. *But Peter ſtanding up, with the Eleven, lift up his voice, and ſaid unto them, ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jeruſalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words*, &c. *Peter* ſpake in, the company, and in the authority of the reſt: thoſe awakened ſinners judged that in the ſpeaking of *Peter*, all were concerned, therefore when they were pricked to the heart, they ſaid not only to *Peter*, but to the reſt of the Apoſtles, men, and brethren what ſhall we do? One Miniſter of Chriſt, that ſpeaks the word of God, preacheth in the ſame authority, that all the Miniſters of the Goſpel do.

Thirdly, Why theſe words in the text were ſpoken and affirmed; It was by way of Motive to preſs on the exhortation, we have in *ver.* 38. the *Jews* had lived under the former adminiſtration of the Covenant of grace, in the which the Meſſiah, that was to come, was exhibited in the promiſe, and ſhadowed in many Types, and Figures, by which they were taught to expect, and to look for the coming of the Meſſiah in Perſon. At laſt in the time appointed, he is come to bring, and to eſtabliſh a new and a more glorious adminiſtration, not to diſſolve the Covenant (as ſome would have it) but to eſtabliſh it under a more eminent, and excellent diſpenſation, than ever it was before his incarnation, ſuffering, and aſcenſion. But becauſe he came not with

external pomp and state, That the carnal *Jews* expected him in, he was by them despised, rejected, & persecuted to death, which the infinitely wise God did overule to the accomplishment of his eternal purpose, as to the Salvation of the elect; yet their sin and wickedness was never the less, who took the blessed Son of God, the only Messiah, and by wicked hands, did crucifie and slay him, though he was delivered by the determinate councel of God: the eternal purpose and councel of the everlasting, and infinitely wise God, took place in the *Jews* perpetrating their enmity and malice upon our blessed redeemer, *Acts* 4.27,28. *For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand, and thy councel determined before to be done.* Though all was managed, by the adored wisdom of the eternally wise *Jehovah*, who brought his Son into the world, and delivered him up to be crucified; yet the wickedness of his implacable murdrers was never the less. The Apostle finding some of their hearts to be bleeding, relenting, and greatly affected at their amazing impiety, he labours to set conviction home upon their Consciences, to drive the nail up to the head, he perswades them to repentance, and to submit to Christ his dispensation of the Gospel, and to declare their submission, by their being baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Fourthly, we are to consider, what is here affirmed, this is the matter that we are most to be concerned about, *viz.* this promise is to you, and your children. What this promise is, imports the Emphasis of this text; there are two acceptations, I find to be of these words, I will mention, both of them.

1. Some

1. Some would have the Article ἡ ἐπαγγελία, to point at the Promiſe before-mentioned, cited out of the Prophet *Joel*, *ver.* 16, 17. *But this is that which was ſpoken by the prophet Joel, and it ſhall come to paſs in the laſt days, (ſaith God) I will pour out of my ſpirit upon all fleſh: and your ſons, and your daughters ſhall propheſie, and your young men ſhall ſee viſions, and your old men ſhall dream dreams.* This (ſay ſome) doth relate to the extraordinary effuſion of the Spirit of God, that ſome ſhould enjoy. But I find, that there are Expoſitors, that encline not to this. I ſhall lay down two or three Reaſons, why I judge, that the Promiſe in this Text doth not refer to that of the pouring out of the Spirit in great meaſure.

1. The interpoſition of a large diſcourſe, between the mention of that promiſe, and the Text, ſeems to break off all connection, between the diſcourſe concerning the Counſel of God in giving up Chriſt to death, and then to give him a Glorious reſurrection revealed at large in the *Pſalms*, which had been now accompliſhed by them, tho' with wicked intentions: This interpoſeth; ſo that here, the Apoſtle ſeems to be upon a new matter, altogether diſtinct from that promiſe of the extraordinary, and plentiful effuſion of the Holy Ghoſt.

2. Becauſe they that did believe, and were baptized, did not receive theſe extraordinary gifts; therefore it is not to be ſuppoſed, that the Apoſtle would deceive, and delude them, in making ſuch a promiſe unto them, which was not to be performed, and never to be imparted unto them. The holy Preacher did only induce, and ſweetly entice them with a promiſe, which upon their accepting of his counſel, they might be certain to enjoy: It was indeed a moſt gracious promiſe, ſuch an one, that would make them eternally happy, and more neceſſary than the gifts of Miracles.

3. Be-

3. Becauſe the promiſe here meant, is of a perpetual duration, at leaſt to be in force in all Ages; for it is extended to as many, as the Lord ſhall call, which doth reach to all Ages, and Generations, and ſo is a promiſe that is not limited and reſtrained to ſome Ages, and to ſome Chriſtians, but toucheth and belongeth unto all: Whereſoever God ſhall be pleaſed to call any, the promiſe ſhall be extended to them, and their children; this laid down as a ground-work for the proceedings of grace, in encouraging to believe, and repent, to the end of times, even unto the calling in of all the Elect.

2. There is another acceptation of the Words, which I ſhall take up withal, ſuch a one that I think is built upon better grounds; let us obſerve well the Article ἡ, that is ſet before the word *promiſe*, and that may give us a clear light herein, ἡ ἐπαγγελία.

This muſt denote ſome great and eminent promiſe, that was made to the *Jews*, and ſuch a promiſe that they were well acquainted withal: *The promiſe is to you, and to your children*, the promiſe that was made to you, and that is well known to you. This can be looked upon as nothing leſs, then the Covenant of Grace, or one of the uppermoſt or top-branches of it; for to them did pertain the Covenant of promiſe, *Rom.* 9. 4. *Who are Iſraelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving the law, and the ſervice of God, and the promiſes.* Let us ſee what they be called in *Acts* 3. 25. *Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, ſaying unto Abraham, And in thy ſeed ſhall all the kindred of the earth be bleſſed.* But what was that ſay you, or what Covenant was that? You may ſee it in *Gen.* 17. 4, 7. *As for me, my covenant is with thee, and thou ſhalt be the*

father of many nations; or as the words may be read, of multitudes of Nations. He was then but the Father of one Nation, I but God doth here promiſe unto him, that he ſhall be a Father of a multitude of Nations. This muſt needs look unto the *Gentiles*, and the many Nations of them, after the Incarnation, Suffering, and Aſcenſion of the Meſſiah, when the Wall of partition was to be broken down, and the Covenant of *Abraham* carried over unto them. *And I will eſtabliſh my covenant between me, and thee, and thy ſeed after thee, in their generations, for an everlaſting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy ſeed after thee.* This is the Covenant-promiſe the Apoſtle urgeth upon theſe convinced and awaken'd Sinners, that he might overcome them to repent, and accept of the new adminiſtration of the Covenant; for the promiſe was to them, and to their Children. *Quod illis filios adjungit, pendet ex verbis promiſſionis; ergo Deus tuus, & ſeminis tui poſt te*, Gen. 17. 17. *Ubi Deus filios patribus accenſet in adoptionis gratiâ*, Saith a Learned Expoſitor, and he addeth, *Hic locus abundè refellit* Anabaptiſtas, *qui infantes ex fidelibus genitos à baptiſmo arcent, quaſi non ſint Eccleſiæ membra:* This place (ſaith he) doth abundantly confute the *Anabaptiſts*, who drive away the Infants born of godly Parents, as if they were not Members of the Church.

2. The Promiſe here ſpoke of, muſt be ſuch an one, which gives remiſſion of ſins, and the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt; ſuch an one, that to drooping diſconſolate Souls, aſſures of pardoning and ſanctifying Grace: *Ver.* 38. *Then Peter ſaid unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you for the remiſſion of ſins, and ye ſhall receive the gift of the holy Ghoſt.* This is that Promiſe, that he tells them doth appertain to them, and not to them only, but to their Children alſo. The ſame Promiſe we have, *Jer.* 31. 33, 34. and *Ezek.* 36. 25, 26, 27.

26, 27. It must be such a Promise, as carries in the womb of it, the offer of pardoning and sanctifying Mercy, which is in the Covenant of Grace.

3. The Scope of the Apostle is to shew, what an Obligation there was lying upon them, to accept of and to believe in Christ freely offered unto them, and not to stand out, and be shy of coming under his new administration: From hence he argues, *for the promise is to you, and your children.* We may sum it up thus, *q. d.* You are the Posterity of such, whom God accepted, and took into Covenant with himself, promising to be a God to them, and their Seed, to whom he also promised, to send his Son, by whom this Blessing should be confirmed; accordingly this promised Seed, the great Promise of the Covenant, is come for this very end, *Rom.* 15. 8. *Now I say, that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promise made unto the fathers*: To confirm the Covenant, not to dissolve it; confirm it, to whom? To the *Jews*, and also to the *Gentiles*. I but, how is this confirmed by Christ, if the Children must since the coming of Christ be shut out of the Covenant? Oh! what a sweet allurement was here, to hasten their acceptance of the Apostles Exhortation! Oh! (said he) do not you by your infidelity, and distrust of the Grace and Mercy of God, deprive your selves of such an inconceivable and inestimable Blessing and Priviledge: Thus saith an Excellent Author.

So that the Apostle lays before them a good encouragement to come to Christ, and a firm bottom of hope to found pardon upon their Repentance; because in their Church-estate, which was going also to be carried over unto the *Gentiles*, they and their Children were under, being in covenant with God, and stood firmly possessed of the same, which God would make good to them, and confirm

confirm them in; if by their unbelief they did not cut themselves and their children off. So the Promise is the Covenant of Grace, made to *Abraham*, and his Seed, continued hitherto to them, and their Children. Here we may evidently see, that the Apostle does not undertake to dissolve the Covenant, nor to cut off the gracious Entail thereof as to the Children, nor shut them out of this great Blessing, he would establish them in; but acquaints these vile, and trembling Sinners, that the Promise is to them, and their Children.

2. Quest. *What is meant by Children?*

Answ. By Children is meant the natural Seed, Children after the Flesh, for the Covenant here is the Covenant made with *Abraham*, and his natural Seed. This is that Covenant the Apostle mentions when he saith, *The promise is to you, and your children: Viz.* That Covenant which they were well acquainted withal, and valued themselves highly from. Our Brethren the *Anabaptists* affirm, That *Abraham*'s natural Seed had only a Covenant of temporal Promises, that the natural Seed had no part in the Covenant of Grace, but only the Spiritual, the Followers of *Abraham*'s Faith.

But we affirm, That by Children here are meant the natural Seed, Τοῖς τέκνοις ὑμῶν— *Such as were begotten of you, and did spring and proceed from your Loyns*: As when the Covenant was renewed at first with *Abraham*, God would be a God to him, and to his Seed, that Seed that was to be circumcised; so the terms of the same Covenant are here repeated by the Apostle, *The promise is to you, and your children*: Christ would make good his Promise to all Believers: This is that which (I hope) I shall evidently prove in its proper place.

Quest.

3. Queſt. *But if the natural Seed be here meant, as having an Intereſt in the Covenant with their Parents, whether is not their Right and Title limited, and reſtrained by the following Expreſſion; The time of their calling, as many as the Lord our God ſhall call, and none but ſuch, and never till then?*

Anſw. There have been ſo many Learned Divines, that have gone before with ſuch clearneſs of Light in this Controverſie, that little can be added, or need to be ſpoken; ſomething conſonant to what they have ſaid, and agreeable to their Anſwers I ſhall offer.

We are to diſtinguiſh about Calling, for Calling is either effectual and ſaving, or only external Calling.

1. There is an effectual and ſaving Calling, that which appertains to the Elect of God, by which (by the external Call of the Word, and the inward efficacy of the Spirit) they be throughly Called out of all Sin unto God. To urge a neceſſity of this, without which, no Benefits of the bleſſed Covenant of Promiſe, can be obtained or challenged, is a palpable Error, againſt which there may be many Clouds of Witneſſes produced to teſtifie. In every Age of the Church, and propagation of the Covenant, there have been many Hypocrites, and formal Profeſſors, that have had a ſtanding in the Church, which is a Priviledge of the Covenant, yet had no effectual Calling; ſo it is now, and will be at the coming of Chriſt, when he ſhall find amongſt the Virgins, as many fooliſh, as wiſe: *Mat.* 8. 12. *But the children of the kingdom ſhall be caſt out into outer darkneſs: there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.* Iſa. 33. 14. *The ſinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulneſs hath ſurprized the hypocrites: who among us ſhall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us ſhall dwell with everlaſting burnings?* Hypocrites that

are

are in the Church, and externally in Covenant, ſhall poſſeſs the hotteſt place in Hell. Will our Adverſaries that apply the Seal, and take into Covenant their *way*, be ſo bold, as to ſay, that all thoſe they admit to Baptiſm are true Believers, and Goſpel-penitents? Do not many of them prove Apoſtates? And are not many of them caſt out of their Churches, and delivered over to Satan? And may they not have cunning Hypocrites among them that enjoy many Priviledges with them, and ſuch as they thought to be effectually Called?

2. If they ſay that an outward Call be urged, as neceſſary to the obtaining an Intereſt in the Promiſe, then the natural Seed of Believers enjoy this Calling virtually in and with their Parents, with whom they are confederate, which they are Called to do, as *Deut.* 29. 10, 11, 12. Where we have a ſolemn way of the People viſibly ſtanding before the Lord, to enter into Covenant with him, and they had their little ones with them, as confederates with their Parents, and ſo part of thoſe that were ſeparated and Called to be the diſtinct People of the Lord, Members of the Church in covenant with him.

2. *Anſw.* And what I judge the fulleſt: That that Reſtriction, *As many as the Lord ſhall call*, pertains only to thoſe that are afar off, and hath no reſpect to theſe here ſpoken unto, or to their children: If we conſider, the Apoſtle doth add this, partly to diſcover the glorious Intention of the Grace of God in carrying over the Promiſe and the Covenant of Grace under the new adminiſtration unto the *Gentiles*, who were accounted afar off, and alſo to give thoſe he ſpake unto the greater, and the more ample encouragement, to accept of, and cloſe in with his Exhortation, to repent and to believe. As thus, If God will be

ſo

so gracious to them that are afar off, as upon their repentance to admit them, and their children, into covenant with him; why do ye doubt and fear? Both you and your children are in covenant with him already. They that trouble us with the Dust of their false Glosses, to blind the Eyes of the Simple, and to darken clear Scriptures by all means, would have that Clause to be applied to all the three Subjects, *viz.* They, their children, and those afar off when Called, then the Promise is theirs; but that the Apostle meaneth and restraineth this only to those that are afar off, I shall evince by several Reasons, which if ponderously thought upon, may give good satisfaction herein.

1. Calling of Persons supposeth such that are at a distance off; therefore it must peculiarly and only belong to them that were afar off, πᾶσιν τοῖς εἰς μακρὰν ——— In this Channel runs the Stream of Expositors, those that be afar off, they mean the *Gentiles* in opposition to the *Jews* that were nigh. Thus the Scripture doth distinguish between the *Jews*, and the *Gentiles*, Isa. 57. 19. *I create the fruit of the lips; peace, peace to him that is afar off, and to him that is near:* Here is a blessed Promise of the Grace of God, in reference unto the Calling of the *Gentiles*, that were said to be afar off, in opposition to the *Jews* that were nigh. They were nigh to God, and they and their children were in covenant: I but said the Lord, *I will create the fruit of the lips; peace to those that are afar off*, viz. the *Gentiles*. Eph. 2. 11, 12, 13, 17. *Wherefore remember that ye being in time passed uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the common-wealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus, ye who were*

were ſometimes far off, are made nigh by the blood of Chriſt. This was the ſtate of the *Gentiles*, they were far off; I but the *Jews* at that time were nigh. *And came, and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh*, viz. the *Jews*, Children of the Covenant, God was their God, and the God of their Children: I but the *Gentiles* were Strangers from the Common-wealth of *Iſrael*, not in covenant with God, and afar off; they be called, as we ſee in the Scripture, thoſe that be remote and diſtant, and muſt be meant in this Text.

2. What rational account can be aſſigned, or can any give why the Apoſtle ſhould here mention the Children, if children here, the Seed of the faithful that be in Covenant, ſhould not be meant of the Gentiles. Thoſe two Members of the diſtinction, you that are nigh, and thoſe that are afar off, would take in all perſons in the world; and *fruſtra fit per plura, &c.* the Children of theſe would be found either afar off, or nigh, one of thoſe terms, would have involved them all; the mentioning of the Children muſt be an impertinency, if it were not for ſome other reaſon. There are ſome I know for a ſhift (this bearing hard upon them) will urge that imprecation, *Mat.* 27. 25. but it is improbable, that all that were the hearers of this Sermon, did joyn in that dreadful wiſh, for many of them were ſtrangers, and lived remote from *Jeruſalem.* However the Apoſtle preſſeth them all alike to repent, and to yeild ſubjection to Chriſt, by an argument from the Covenant, which carries weight enough with it, though they had never been guilty of that horrid imprecation. This argument of the Covenant hath been preſſed at another time to prevail upon the *Jews* to the ſame duty of repentance, *Acts* 3. 19, 20, 25. *Repent ye therefore, and be converted that your ſins may be*

blotted

blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and he shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you. In this verse he doth incourage them from a promise, and observe the rare Motive, *ye are the children of the Prophets, and of the Covenant, which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, and in thy seed shall all the kindred of the earth be blessed.* This extends to them that were afar off, not only the kindred of the *Jews*, but also the kindred of the Gentiles, should partake of the blessing of *Abraham*, *viz.* of the Covenant made with *Abraham*. *Gal.* 3. 14. *That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles*, (the blessing of *Abrahams* Covenant through Jesus Christ) whose blood was the blood of the Covenant.

3. The Apostle doth here fix his argument, in the benefit that will redound unto them, and to their posterity by their submission to the Gospel Administration; by this he doth Emphatically press them to it. Oh! what an incouraging and cogent Argument doth this Apostle (by a divine instinct) urge them withall, such a one, that poor awakened souls, ready to sink into desperation could not tell how to reject or withstand. This seems to be the genuine sense of it, you are greatly troubled for sin, in general, and some of you have been guilty of that dreadful sin, of a malicious pouring out of the incorruptible and sacred blood of the Son of God, and crucifying the Lord of Glory, therefore have highly deserved that his blood should be upon your heads, and upon the heads of your Children for ever; and since you have instead of reverencing, killed the Lord of the Vineyard, you have dreadfully provoked God to turn you out of it for ever; but if after all, you will but submit to him that you have crucified, it shall not be so, your deserts though never so great

and

and crying, shall never be given unto you; but you shall still be to the Lord a chosen and a peculiar People, the Church and the People of God; to you and your Children the Promise shall still continue, and all under a better Administration than ever; because there is now abundance more of grace, and of the Spirit to be poured out, you and your Children shall have the first experience of it. Oh how sweetly doth the Apostle here entice and allure them to accept of the Seasonable offer made unto them.

4. That interpretation certainly that renders this Argument of the Apostle, to the *Jews* (to prevail upon them to the duty exhorted unto) to be a discouragement unto them, and to dishearten them in their submitting to the Gospel-Administration, rather than an incouragement, is not to be admitted. That which doth contradict, or at leastwise greatly impede, and obstruct the design of the Apostle, must not be entertained. What was the design of the Apostle, but to perswade these poor lost creatures to accept of Christ, and his Administration that was taking place. Therefore that he might obtain his end (said he) the Promise is to you, and your Children, for both were concerned in the blood of Christ; and we may rationally suppose, these weeping bleeding sinners were not only concerned for themselves, but for their Children also. They might well deliberate in themselves thus, what will become of us, I and of our miserable off-spring too? Why saith the Apostle, here is that that may allay all the amazing and confounding tumult of your self-condemning hearts, the Promise is to you, and your Children. The Apostle did see that their Soul-disease, had so sunk their Spirits, and they were so ready to faint, that they wanted the highest Cordial that could be poured into them, and without this ingredient

gredient of their Children, it could never have revived them. This was the opening of a comfortable door of hope, in their pinching and affrighting valley of *Achor*.

I have wondered sometimes, how our Friends the *Anabaptists* can support their minds, when they behold their dear dying Infants, ready to expire and to give up the ghost; to restrain the interest of the Children of these *Jews* in the Promise, to the time of their calling, could not but be a considerable discouragement unto them from coming under this Administration, rather than an encouragement. That it would have been so I shall give two Reasons to prove it.

1 This would make their exchange to be for the worse, and not the better; for the Covenant under which they were before, did run to them, and their Seed, but this runs otherwise to the great disadvantages of the Children, and the great discouragement of the Parents. Children by this way of Interpretation are excluded and dismist the Covenant till their call. This could not but have a deep regret upon the hearts of these Parents, that were well instructed into their Childrens Covenant-right with them, and did so strongly depend upon it as they did.

2. This would put their Children into the same condition, with those afar off, the restriction equally taking hold of the Children of the *Jews*, with the *Gentiles* and Heathens yet afar off, which would sound harshly in the Ears of the *Jews*.

If it were so, of what import must the Argument be but of this, *Viz.* If ye will now, ye awakened trembling *Jews* believe in Christ, and come under his Administration, the Promise shall continue unto you, but your Children shall be cut off and turned out of this priviledge, they shall be in the same condition of the rest of the *Pagan* world,

world; when they hereafter, and any of the Heathen shall be called, then they may have a part in the same Promise too, and not till then. This being contained in that Interpretation, whether it would not in the nature of the Argument, rather drive them off, then draw them on, let any impartial person judge. Was this a probable way to comfort and support, these self-condemned sinners, to deliver such a heavy message unto them, as to wrest from out of their bosoms, and to rend all their Children out of the Covenant of grace, and turn them into the herd of those that are afar off, that were out of Covenant, without God and having (remaining in that condition) no hope in the world? *Eph.* 2. 12. This would be but to add affliction to the afflicted, and to cast a wonderful stumbling Block in the way of these *Jews*.

But the true and sound Interpretation gives them choice relief, and removes all impediments out of their way, leaving them no remora to obstruct or retard the Apostles exhortation unto them. The Promise is already to you, and to your Children, as you are *Jews*, which Promise shall be confirmed to you and your Children if you now believe. I the Apostle, that he might give them the highest incouragements, tells them furthermore, that the Promise shall be extended to those that are afar off, even to so many as the Lord in any part of the world shall call, and they, and their Children shall partake of the Covenant made with them. Here is the full breast of the Gospel laid open for to hang upon to suck and be satisfied; here is the fountain opened, and not only the Parents, but the Children also invited unto it.

It is a good observation, that a learned Man here observes (saith he) *hic enim Judæi aliis præferuntur, quia sunt velut primogeniti in Dei familia, imo*

imo ſingulari privilegio Segregati, tunc erant a reliquis omnibus; ergo legitimum ordinem Petrus obſervat, quin Judæis aſſignat priores honoris partes: Quòd illis filios adjungit, pendet ex verbis promiſſionis, Ero Deus tuus, et ſeminis tui poſt te. Gen. 17. 17.

Having ſpoke thus much to clear up my way for a Doctrine, I come to propound that great truth, that is obviouſly comprehended in this text for our comfort and improvement. There be indeed two eminet doctrines in the text, I ſhall name both, but fix only upon one.

First Doctrine, *That the Children of believing Parents, as ſuch, are taken into Covenant with God with their Parents.*

Second Doctrine, *the Covenant being made with Believers and their Children, is a very great obligation and inducement; to repent and to accept of the new Adminiſtration of the Covenant.* This the Apoſtle doth ſtrongly and aptly urge, upon the convinced *Jews* unto this great duty. But I ſhall not ſtand upon this truth, my buſineſs is with the other.

This is the Doctrine I would by the help of God treat of.

That the Children of believing Parents, as ſuch, are taken into Covenant with their Parents. This the Apoſtle poſitively and comfortably aſſerts, the Covenant of Promiſe that is to the Parent, is alſo to the children; they be both involved in one and the ſame gracious Covenant. God doth not take in the Parent, and exclude the child; but he admits both into this bleſſed *holding*, by the golden rod of his grace. This inheritance hath a grant with an irrepealable Intaile, upon the Seed and off-ſpring. Believers and their Seed are in the Covenant of grace with God, by this the Child holds *in capite* from him from whom he doth deſcend.

ſcend. This is a Doctrine that is violently oppoſed by thoſe that venture ſomething boldly to contract, and reſtrain the Covenant into a narrower compaſs, than ever the Grace of God in conſtituting of it intended, by turning (what they can) covenanted Infants into the ſame miſerable Wild Field, with the Seed of *Infidels* and *Pagans*. But this is very plain to every Eye that will obſerve the Scriptures, that when ever the Lord was pleaſed to enter into a Covenant of Grace with the Parents, he did alſo with the Children, *Gen.* 12. 1, 2, 3. *Now the Lord ſaid unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy fathers houſe, into a land that I ſhall ſhew thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bleſs thee, and make thy name great; and thou ſhalt be a bleſſing. And I will bleſs them that bleſs thee, and curſe them that curſe thee; and in thee ſhall all the families of the earth be bleſſed.* Gen. 17. 7. *And I will eſtabliſh my covenant betwixt me and thee, and thy ſeed after thee, in their generations, for an everlaſting covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to thy ſeed after thee.* This is not to laſt for a time, or for an Age only, but for ever, even to the utmoſt point of time, until the Mediator (in whoſe hands this Covenant is) ſhall perfectly accompliſh his Work. *Ver.* 19. *And God ſaid, Sarah thy wife ſhall bear thee a ſon indeed; and thou ſhalt call his name Iſaac; and I will eſtabliſh my covenant with him for an everlaſting covenant, and with his ſeed after him.* Acts 3. 25. *Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, ſaying unto Abraham, And in thy ſeed ſhall all the children of the earth be bleſſed*; viz. All Nations. Here we ſee, He was not to be a Covenant-Father only to the Nation of the *Jews*, but alſo to thoſe of the *Gentiles*; all of them that ſhould be called, and converted unto God, by the preaching of the Goſpel, they were to be impa-

led in *Abraham's* Covenant, and he was to be their Father, *Rom.* 11. 17. *And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild olive-tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree.* Here must be a graffing in, suitable to the casting out or breaking off; that cannot be, unless the *Gentiles* and their Children (their Spriggs) be graffed in, as the *Jews* and their Children were broken off, *Gal.* 3. 14. *That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles (through Jesus Christ;) that we might receive the promise of the Spirit*: Viz. The Blessing of *Abraham* in his Covenant might through Christ be brought over unto the *Gentiles*. The Lord Jesus was the great Seed of the Covenant, and the Mediator of it, and through the effusion of his Blood this Covenant is conferred upon the *Gentiles*, according to many Evangelical Promises, made before the Actual Exhibition and Incarnation of the Son of God, our *Emmanuel, God with us*. These are a few of that Cloud of Witnesses, that might have been brought to prove this Doctrine; let them suffice for the present, many more will occur in our Discourse.

In the handling of this Point I would do these things.

I. *Open the Doctrine something more.*
II. *Lay down the Demonstrations of it to prove it.*
III. *Give some Reasons of it.*
IV. *Make a little suitable Use of it.*

The First General Particular, *The opening the Doctrine*: To do this, I shall propound some Questions, and give the Answers unto them. This may tend very much to clear up this Important and Evangelical Proposition.

1. Quest.

1. Queſt. *What Covenant are we here to underſtand to be the Covenant made with* Abraham, *that Believers, and their Seed, are incloſed in together?*

Anſw. It is the Covenant of Grace: This is the Promiſe, or Covenant, in our Text, that refers to that in *Gen.* 17. 7. It is not a Covenant of Works, (as ſome would have it to be.) Our Brethren the *Anabaptiſts*, would by all means have this to be a Covenant of Works, or a Covenant only relating to carnal and outward Mercies and Bleſſings, and that, becauſe ſhould this be granted to be a Covenant of Grace, then we have gained the *Point*, as to the Seal of the Covenant, pertaining to Infants. Our great *Champion* hath lately laboured extreamly to violate this Text, and to pull down that bleſſed Foundation God hath laid for us to build upon, as to our ſelves and little ones; by his ſo doing, he offered bold attempts to ſubvert many of the choice Texts, that appertain to this. To promote his Error, and Confidence, he would have this in ſubſtance to be the ſame Covenant of Works which the Lord made with *Adam*; but I ſhall have occaſion (though but a poor Piſmire) to meet with this great *Goliah* that hath given me ſeveral Challenges in his publick Pulpit, in the hearing of his Magnifying Auditory.

Methinks, if Men did but with a ſerious and impartial Eye, view that Text that mine refers unto, ſuch is the nature, the tenor, frame, and circumſtances of it, that they durſt not call this into queſtion: But how ready are Men to ſhut their Eyes againſt that Light, that would diſcover unto them ſomething, that they are too tenacious of. It is ſad to ſee how ſome good Men, that would be thought great Admirers of the Grace of God, and yet do ſet themſelves in this place againſt this high Expreſſion of his Grace in his

Covenant. This is the ſame Covenant of Grace, for the ſubſtance of it, that is now on foot in the *New Teſtament*, (ſince Chriſt came, and hath ſent down his Holy Spirit to enlighten us into the knowledge of his Grace, which runs through the Covenant, whoſe Blood was the Blood of the Covenant,) made with thoſe Fathers according to the Fleſh, of whom Chriſt came, who is bleſſed for ever.

Here becauſe my furious Adverſary (right or wrong) will have this to be but a Covenant of Works, or of outward Bleſſings, and will not ſuffer one Drop of the pure, and ſpecial Grace of God in a Covenant-way, provided for the Salvation of the Elect, nor any Emanation of Gods Love to be through this Channel tranſmitted into the World: I ſhall endeavour to prove by ſeveral things, that this is a Covenant of Grace; if we can but make good this, (I judge) we ſhall gain a good *Point*, and drive our Opponent out of one of his ſtrongeſt *Poſts*, and ſhall take that, which he runs to as his impregnable *Fort*. The Lord open our Eyes to ſee the Truth in this great Affair, with this I think a great deal of Building will ſtand or fall.

I ſhall briefly lay down ſome *Reaſons*, that to me do carry the Matter beyond all doubt, that the Covenant in *Gen.* 17. 7. was a Covenant of Grace.

1. *Reaſon* May be taken from *Abraham*, the Perſon choſen out from the reſt of the World, to partake of this diſtinguiſhing Priviledge. God did appear to him, and did call him to ſuch a great Favour: Thus to take him and his Children, and his Family, into covenant with himſelf, and to make him the Father of the Faithful in all Ages and Generations; What could move the Lord to this, but his naked Love, Mercy, and Grace? This is that which God did do for him,

infinite

Infinite Grace did single him out, for this blessed Covenant-work, calling him out from the midst of a wicked and idolatrous People, and Generation, *Acts* 7. 2, 3. *And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers hearken, The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.* Here we have the Lord selecting (through discriminating Grace and Goodness) this Father from the rest of the ignorant blind World where he was, and it was that he might confer this honour upon him, and his, in making this Everlasting Covenant of Grace with them. He that called him out of Grace did it much for this end, and purpose, that he might make and establish this Covenant of Grace with him.

2. *Reason.* Because of the quality of the Persons, betwixt whom this Covenant was made, let us but consider the state of Man, when this Covenant was made, and then we may easily see the quality of those, between whom was made this happy Covenant. Man was not now in his perfect Station, in the which he was set down, as he came out of the pure Mint, with a perfect Draught and Impression of the Divine Image upon him; but in an apostate sinful state, and *Abraham* though call'd, and sanctified, in an imperfect state. Therefore this Covenant must be made between God and *Abraham*, not as God is a Creatour, and as Men are innocent; thus it was in the Covenant of Works made with *Adam*. But God as gracious, merciful, pardoning Sin through the Blood of the Covenant, and Men as sinful, vile, indebted to Divine Justice, and obnoxious to the Wrath of God. If *Abraham* had been as perfect as *Adam* was, when the Lord made a Covenant of Works with him, then we should have some ground to

give heed to those, that would have this to be a Covenant of Works. I demand of my Opponent, where God made a Covenant of Works with his Redeemed People, since the Fall of Man? As God ever dealt with his People in a Covenant-way, since the Fall, so they are capable of no other way, *Ezek.* 16. 5, 6, 8. *None eye pitied thee, to do any of these things unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but when thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thy blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live: yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live. Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love, and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entred into a covenant with thee, thou becamest mine.* What Covenant can it be, but a Covenant of Grace, that such polluted Creatures can be taken into? And thus it was with *Abraham*, when God found, called him, appeared unto, and enter'd into Covenant with him.

3. *Reason.* Because of the matter promised here unto *Abraham* in this Covenant; God doth promise to be a God to him, and to his Seed after him for ever. Oh! this is the great matter promised on Gods part; this holds forth more than a Legal Covenant; Is there a more gracious, and a more comprehensive Promise, and fuller of the Grace of God, in all the *Book* of God, than this? Here the Lord doth give, and make over himself, yea all his glorious Attributes, Names, Titles, Grace, Love, all Temporal, Spiritual and Eternal Blessings; here God doth give himself, the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, the whole Nature of God, and all the *Persons*, the Godhead with all the Attributes of that Nature, and all the Offices of those *Persons*: Thus saith Judicious

Cotton

Cotton in his *Treatise* upon the Covenant, *The Lord through this Covenant gives himself, and all his, to his covenanted People through all the Generations of the World.* I would willingly understand what may be the reason (if there can be any given) when this Excellent Promise is repeated in many other places of Scripture, that it is allow'd to be of Grace, and not here, notwithstanding (if I mistake not) when this Promise is inserted in other places, it is often taken from this, *Jer.* 24. 7. and 31. 33. and 32. 38. *Ezek.* 11. 20. and 34. 24, 31. and 36. 38. and 37. 27. Here we have the same Promise, and full of Grace, and why not in *Gen.* 17. 7. Oh! there would be great ground of fear, should this be granted; for then the Seal of the Covenant must follow, as we shall see in the close of this Discourse. This is that Covenant that Believers and their Seed be under, since the Ascension of the Messiah, and that we may clearly discern it, God is pleased to use the old Phrase and Form of the Promise, 2 *Cor.* 6. 18. *Heb.* 8. 10. The same Language and Dialect, we have speaking of the *New Jerusalem* Privileges and Glorious State, *Rev.* 21. 3. *And I heard a voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

There is the other Branch of the Promise here, that we must by the Rule of Relatives understand. If God doth give himself to *Abraham* and his Seed, then he takes them, and chuseth them to be his People, and Portion for ever; when the Lord is pleased to say, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed*, this must needs be involv'd, *thou and thy seed shall be my people for ever*; and so it is relatively exprest often in the Covenant-Language; Now I pray, is not all this of pure Grace?

4. *Reason.* This is a Covenant made in the Hands of Christ the Mediatour, and it was confirmed in him, the great Seed of the Covenant, and the Head and Foundation of all those that God doth take into Covenant with him. This Covenant was ratified and confirm'd by the Efficacy and Blood of the Mediatour, otherwise neither *Abraham* nor *Isaac* could have been saved; and hence the Blood of Christ is called the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant, *Heb.* 13. 20. *Now the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,* &c. God in making this Covenant had respect to the efficacious and meritorious Blood of his Son, or therwise he could never have made such a Promise here, of being such a gracious God to *Abraham,* and his Seed for ever. It is judiciously said of a Learned Authour, that in this Covenant the Lord taketh the chiefest of the Seed of *Abraham* (*viz.* the Lord Jesus Christ) to be the Mediatour and Surety of it, and so through him are all the Promises and Blessings of the Covenant convey'd unto *Abraham* and his Seed, (his faithful Seed) all the World over; therefore he is called the Mediatour of a better Covenant, *Heb.* 7. 22. and 8. 6. And as it was made with *Abraham* and his Seed in the Hands of Christ, so when it was translated unto the *Gentiles,* it was by, and through him, and confirmed unto them by him, *Gal.* 3. 14. *That the blessing of Abraham may come on the Gentiles (through Jesus Christ;) that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.* The Blessing of *Abraham, viz.* the Covenant of *Abraham:* Rom. 15. 8. *Now I say, that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.* He was the Minister of Circumcision, the great Instructer of the *Jews,* and did first confirm the Covenant to them, and

then

then to the *Gentiles*. *Ver.* 9. *And that the Gentiles might glorifie God for his mercy*; viz. for the Mercy of God through Christ, by and through whom, the blessed Covenant was confirmed unto them. So that we may see, that Christ was the Mediatour of this Covenant made with *Abraham* and his Seed; witness those many Types of Christ which were annexed unto it, *viz.* Their expiatory and propitiatory Sacrifices injoined the whole Congregation in case of Sin; also the two Goats, one for a Sin-offering for the whole Congregation, and the other the Scape-goat, over which all the Sins of the *Children of Israel* were to be confess'd by the Priests, *&c.*

5. *Reason.* Because this is a Covenant that freely holds out, and offers pardon of Sin without Works; therefore then it cannot be a Covenant of Works. It holds out pardon of Sin freely, by believing in Christ. The Covenant of Works (we know) holds forth no pardon of Sin, no Mercy to Transgressors that violate and break the smallest point of it, *Gal.* 3. 10. *Deut.* 27. 26. I, but this Covenant doth, it holds out pardon of Sin to the vilest and worst of Sinners, to those that did barbarously and maliciously pour out the Blood of the Mediator of this Covenant, *Exod.* 2. 37, 38, 39. This is a Covenant that did freely offer remission and pardon of Sin, without the Works of the Law. *Abraham* himself through this Covenant, by believing in the Mediatour and Testator of it, was justified and pardoned; read *Rom.* 4. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, *&c.* That must surely be a Covenant of Grace, that brings in remission of Sin, and Justification by Christ, through Faith: God did promise to be a God to him, and his Seed, a God to pardon.

6. *Reason.* Because of that Seal the Lord did command to be affixed to this Covenant, which was Circumcision; Who can deny, but that the

Lord did command this Seal, Sign, or Token, to be ſet to the Covenant to confirm and eſtabliſh it? *Gen.* 17. 10. *This is my covenant, which ye ſhall keep between me, and you, and thy ſeed after thee; Every man-child among you ſhall be circumciſed.* This God did Inſtitute, as the Initiating Ordinance; by this they were to enter, as viſible Perſons into this Covenant, or to be viſibly diſcovered, and own'd ſuch that were in covenant with God, and in a covenant way devoted and given up unto him. Let me here ask this Queſtion, Did not this Seal of the Covenant denote, that that Covenant it did appertain unto, to be a Covenant of Grace? It is next to a Prodigy to me, that any ſhould Aſſert, that the Covenant that God made with *Abraham*, was a Covenant of Works, and yet Circumciſion was the Seal of it, for ſo it is expreſly commanded of God to be, as we have ſeen. Did we ever read of this Seal affix'd to the Covenant of Works? No; in the perfect ſtate that Man was in, when God enter'd into a Covenant of Works, there was no need of, nor occaſion for this Sacrament or Seal.

Let us but a little conſider the Uſes and Words of this Seal, and we may ſee, that that muſt be a Covenant of Grace, to which it is affix'd as a Seal; for either it holds forth our need of Grace, or the merciful proviſion of Grace prepared for us. I ſhall only mention a very few Particulars.

1. This doth intimate unto us, that vile polluted State of Sin, that we were conceived and tranſmitted into the World in. This may give us the knowledge of our undone State by Nature, how God may loath, and abhor us for ever. The cutting off of the Fore-skin of the Fleſh, diſcovers the filthineſs of our Fleſh, and how by Sin we have forfeited our ſelves, and all into the hands of Juſtice, that we be filthy and guilty Sinners.

2. This

2. This sets forth the gracious Purposes and Intentions of a merciful God, to wash, and to cleanse, and to sanctifie us by his Grace, and by the Blood of Sprinkling: The Blood that did follow the circumcising Instrument did clearly signifie, that therefore cleansing and sanctification are set forth by Spiritual Circumcision. When God doth graciously promise to wash and to sanctifie, he doth promise to circumcise the Heart, *Deut.* 30. 6. *And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayst live.* Col. 2. 11. *In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ:* viz. By the Sanctification of the Blood and Spirit of Christ. *Phil.* 3. 3. *For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit:* We have the inward Spiritual Circumcision of the Heart, which was graciously signified by that Seal of the Grace of God belonging to that Covenant of Grace, the Lord was pleas'd to make with *Abraham* and his Seed.

3. To denote, and set forth, the need we have of the Blood of Christ to justifie us, and that God would justifie us through his Blood. And this *Abraham* had a special eye unto, and his Faith was firmly fix'd upon, after God had made this Covenant with him and his Seed, and fix'd this significant Seal unto it. This might be evidenced by many Scriptures, *Rom.* 14. 1, 2. In many *Verses* in that *Chapter*; therefore it is that Circumcision is called, *a seal of the righteousness of faith, of that righteousness that is apprehended, received, and applied by faith*; certainly then that Covenant that hath such a significant gracious Seal added unto it, can be nothing less, or else, than a Covenant of Grace.

7. *Reason.* To prove that this was a Covenant of Grace may be the great Result and Period of it, which is no less than *Heaven*; this is obviously implied, in the comprehensiveness of this Promise we have here, *Gen.* 17. 7. *I will be a God unto thee, and unto thy seed after thee*; I will be a God unto thee, and all thine Elect Seed for ever; I will be a God to love thee, to provide for thee, to be with thee, and with my self eternally to reward thee. How vain, and frivolous is our *Challenger*, in Asserting that this Covenant made with *Abraham*, was not a Covenant of Grace? Because the great Promises of it were outward Blessings, and the greatest of all was the *Land of Promise*, (*Canaan.*) What is not that a greater Promise, for God to promise himself to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed? Is not an Infinitely Glorious, and Blessed God, better than *Canaan*, than all the *Canaans* and Paradises in the World, yea, than thousands of Worlds? But further to see the ignorance of this Man in the Scripture, and in such Expressions, which denote a higher good intended by God, than what they themselves may import; as this Promise is explained in the *New Testament*: When God did make the Promise of an Earthly *Canaan* to *Abraham* and his Seed, he did ultimately intend a better Land than this, *viz.* an Heavenly one; when the Lord doth promise this *Canaan*, he doth promise Heaven, which this was a Type of; the main thing and good, that the Lord design'd for his People, by this Promise, was Heaven, and that they should be eternally saved. *Abraham* did so understand it, and others of the Fathers, and so set their Hearts upon, and rais'd up an Expectation of that blessed City and Country that was above; that what they had here were but dark Shadows, and cloudy Representations of what was to come, *Heb.* 11. 10, 13, 14, 15, 16.

8. *Reason.*

8. *Reason.* To prove that the Covenant made here with *Abraham*, was a Covenant of Grace, is *viz.* Because of that Obedience, the Lord did both require and accept at the hands of *Abraham*, in this Covenant. There was Obedience, and there was Service, that the Lord did command, and expected from *Abraham*; this will determine, whether this be a Covenant of Works, or of Grace. If it be a Covenant of Works, it requires nothing less than perfect Obedience, nothing short of it will or can be accepted therein, as it was in the Covenant made with *Adam*; *Do this and live.* But now here in *Abraham*'s Covenant, the Lord doth call for, and accept of sincere and upright Obedience, as in *Gen.* 17. 1, 2. *And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to him, and said, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.* (*viz.* right or sincere.) *And I will make my covenant betwixt me and thee.* Every one knows, that though *Abraham* for Grace, and walking with and obeying God, was an excellent Man; yet he was not a sinless, perfect Man; he had the perfection of sincerity, but not a sinless perfection, such an one as *Adam* had in Innocency. In this Covenant, *Abraham* did walk before God, he did please God, and he was accepted by God in vertue of this Covenant, which could never have been, had it not been a Covenant of Grace, that had Christ to be the Mediatour of it, in whom he believed and found acceptance.

Thus Beloved, I promise my self, that I have given you such Reasons, to prove that this Covenant was of Grace, (which the Lord made with *Abraham*, and his Seed for an Everlasting Covenant,) as cannot well be denied.

2. Quest. *Whether some only, or all the Children of Believers, are in this Covenant of Grace, with*

their

their Parents? Whether this Covenant doth incloſe, and impale them all or not.

Anſw. All they that are the Seed of the Faithful, the Lord takes into this Covenant with their Parents: God doth not take ſome, or many, but all; they be all in Covenant with the Lord, until they eject themſelves. When the Lord made this Covenant, and took *Abraham* into it, he took all his Seed with him. *Cain* was in covenant as well as *Abel*, and *Iſhmael* as well as *Iſaac*, though ſome have from Electing Love, and Special Grace, a greater Bleſſing from the Covenant than others, as you will ſee preſently. This Covenant runs to *Abraham*, and his Seed, and to his Seeds Seed. Let not us curtail, and contract Gods Covenant, and confine it to narrower bounds than ever the Lord deſign'd. There be ſome Men that talk great Words of the Grace of God, and yet in the mean time, are great Enemies to the copiouſneſs, and amplitude of it largely expreſſed in his Covenant.

3. Queſt. *Some may ſay, How can that be, that the natural Seed of ſuch that be in covenant, ſhould be in covenant too? Do not we ſee by ſad experience, that many of the Children of pious Parents, prove very profane, and wicked? What do you hold falling from Grace? Here is a Rock that many miſtaken Perſons do ſplit themſelves upon, in reſpect of falling into Error in this Affair, and many through ignorance do ſtumble upon.*

Anſw. More generally we muſt know, that as to the Poſterity of *Abraham*, there are two ſorts of them, though both in covenant. There is a Seed according to the Fleſh, a carnal Off-ſpring and Generations, and they were the Seed of *Abraham*, and did highly value themſelves upon this,

this, and boasted much upon it, *Mat.* 3. 9. *And think not to say within your selves, We have Abraham to be our father.* Bear not too much upon this; think not that this will excuse you, you may be the Seed of *Abraham*, and yet Enemies to the Messiah; for it was the Seed of *Abraham*, that did hate, persecute, crucifie, and slay him, *Acts* 2. So there is a Seed after the Spirit, that be pious and holy, and walk in the Steps of *Abraham*, and in the Paths of the Faith of *Abraham*.

There is a double Paternity, there is the begetting *Abraham*, and a believing *Abraham*; so there is a twofold Sonship, Children according to the Flesh, and Heirs according to the Promise, *Rom.* 9. 6, 7, 8. *Not as though the word of God had taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. Viz.* In short, though all that be in covenant are Children in a proper sense, yet all are not the Spiritual Seed; for we see here, that the Carnal and Spiritual are called the Seed of *Abraham*, *ver.* 7. yet do not all walk in the Steps of *Abraham*, nor partake of the special Grace that *Abraham* did. The Apostle doth here tell us, that we must not think, that the word of God had taken no effect, because not all, nay not (comparatively) many that are the Seed by the natural Seed of *Abraham*, did believe, and embrace it; therefore he doth distinguish of the Seed of *Abraham*, them that be under the Purpose of God to Salvation, and are chosen to Eternal Life, they do, and shall believe, and become the holy, the spiritual, and peculiar Seed. *Abraham* had two Sons, *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, and both taken into co-

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venant; I, but the Line of Election was to run through the Lines of *Isaac*.

That we may something more fully open this Matter to your satisfactions, and that you may rightly understand, how any may be said to be in this Covenant of Grace, and yet in a State of Nature, and in the First *Adam*; I shall distinguish herein, this well understood would contribute greatly to put an end to this Controversie. Some may say the Covenant is full of gracious Promises, and what right can any have unto the same, that be but the natural Seed? Are they Promises of saving Grace, or outward Priviledges, or temporal Mercies? Or what are they? How is this to be understood, that the Promise is to the Children of those that are in covenant, if by Children are meant the natural Seed?

Answ. By Promise, I understand the Covenant of Grace (as I have said) call'd also the Covenant of Promise, *Eph.* 2. 12. and because of this, they that be in it are called the Children of the Promises: Now the Promise, or the Covenant, is taken two ways; and so there are two ways of being in the Covenant.

1. *Strictly*, And that which Divines call *Fœdus Internum*, or *Pars Fœderis Interna*, the Internal Covenant, or the spiritual part of the Covenant; that which doth contain Promises of spiritual Blessings, and saving Graces, such as Justification, Reconciliation, Regeneration, Adoption, Perseverance, and Glorification, or Eternal Life; and hence we read, that God will give a new Heart, that he will take away the Stony Heart out of the Flesh, and will give a Heart of Flesh, that he will circumcise the Heart to love, and fear him, that he will write his Law in their Hearts, and they shall never depart from him, that he will sprinkle clean Water upon them, and they shall be clean, and from all their filthiness and Idols will

will he cleanse them, that he will blot out all their Iniquities, and cast their Sins into the depth of the Sea, and remember them no more. This is the Internal, and spiritual part of the Covenant. These be the Excellent Promises of Special Grace, that God will accomplish and fulfil to all the Elect, both Adult, and Infants that die in their Infancy.

2. Sometimes it is taken more largely, which Divines call *Fœdus Externum*, or *Pars Fœderis Externa*, the External Covenant, or the External part of the Covenant, they being both in truth, but Branches of one and the same Covenant. This External Part contains Promises of many choice Mercies, and Priviledges, which God out of the bounty of his Grace, bestows upon People that be in covenant with him, which he does not bestow upon the rest of the World, which be not taken into covenant with him. One may be in covenant, and partake of many precious and eminent Promises; and yet have no saving and special Grace, or Interest in God. So it was with a Multitude of the *Jews*, yea, with the greatest part of them, and that when our Lord and Saviour himself was amongst, and conversed with them, *Rom.* 2. 28, 29. *For he is not a Jew, that is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God. Viz.* He is not internally, and savingly a *Jew*, he is but only an external one, partaking of the external Blessings of the Covenant, injoying the circumcision of the Flesh, not that of the Spirit. When our Lord and Saviour was in the Flesh, he had much to do with such *Jews*, that boasted themselves of their outward Priviledges, which were great; but neglected the internal part of the Covenant, which

he

he did caution them against; but did not shut them out of the Covenant, but left them as he found them.

This I know is a distinction though never so solid and sound; yet the *Anabaptists* will not take it down: Notwithstanding, I know not how they themselves can subsist without it, in their Covenant-way. They take into the Covenant, and affix the Seal of the Covenant to those that be Adult, profess their Faith in, and Obedience to Christ, and their repentance and renouncing their Infant-baptism, if they have had any. I, but here is the Question, Are all that do so, internally and savingly in covenant with the Lord? Dare they be so bold as to say so? If they dare, I shall offer two things unto them.

1. This is against the plain and evident Truth of the Word of God. Is not the Visible Church otherwise represented in the Scriptures unto us? What are all their *Israel* of the peculiar Seed of *Isaac*? Is this agreeable to the Parables of the Tares, of the Net, of the Wedding, of the Virgins, and of the variety of the Vessels in the Church Visible, and in the House of God? These things are so well known to all that read, and consider what they read, that I need not stand upon them. The Lord Jesus in his little Church, and Family, had one Devil: They be happy Churches indeed, in whom there are no Hypocrites; and from which never any do fall off, and prove Apostates. Oh how many out of the purest Churches shall encrease the number of the Damn'd!

2. This is against too great experiences. How many have we seen to turn out of the way of Truth into Errour? Many that after they have seemed to be washt from their Sins, and have escaped the Pollutions that are in the World through Lust, by the Knowledge of our Lord and

and Saviour Jesus Christ, are again intangled, and turn'd with the Dog unto the Vomit, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21, 22. How many be there, that the unclean Spirit doth but go out of, and after returns again, and takes a greater possession than ever? So that the last end is worse than the beginning, *Mat.* 12. 43, 44, 45. Let me apply my self unto you, my Brethren of the *Anabaptist* Perswasion; Have you no Revolters among you? None that fall from Truth to Errour, from Strictness to Looseness, from an outward holy Conversation to Profaneness? Have you never any occasion to exert your Authority in Excommunication? Have you never any rotten Members to cut off? I am misinformed, if my good Neighbour be not something good and frequent at this Work, after he hath laid his Hands upon his Converts, and rebaptized Proselytes, no wonder when we consider his numerous and easie Admissions. But what I do speak of one, that is but the Head of an overgrown *Schisme*, (his Church, as it is called,) declared to be so, not only by Congegrational, but also by *Anabaptistical* Elders. When the Anti-pædobaptists admit any to the Seals of Church, and Covenant-Fellowship, is it not possible that some false Brethren may creep in unawares? *Jude* 4. Some Wolves get into Sheeps cloathing, and they be lookt upon to be the covenant-People of God; this is undeniable, and their revolt proves themselves to have none of the saving special Gifts and Graces of the same; but at best were only externally in covenant. You will not pretend to put Seals to Blanks; but you will say, They did appear to us to be so, and so, and to be in the Covenant of Grace. For my part, I must say, though I desire to be very careful in my Admissions, yet I have as great a hope, and as much confidence, about the Salvation of Infants in covenant with God, dying in their Infancy, as I

have

have in any that I do admit. Here I may retort upon my Brethren, (because many of your Members that you have taken into covenant, unto whom you have affixed the Seal, do fall off.) Do you hold falling from Grace? So that this may be as well objected against you, in your Adult Persons; as against us in our Infants.

4. Quest. *If it be granted, That Children with their Parents be taken into covenant, even the natural Seed of believing Parents; yet you say, they are but External Priviledges, and Benefits, that many of them do partake of, and a great number of them fall short of the Spiritual and Eternal Advantages of the same: Therefore, what do they obtain thereby, seeing he is not a* Jew *that is one outwardly, &c.? What profit did* Cain *reap by being circumcised, or* Ishmael? For *(as the Apostle saith)* circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision, *Rom.* 2. 25. Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will punish all them which are circumcised with the uncircumcised, *Isa.* 9. 25.

Answ. They have great Advantages more than others have, that are not so much as externally in covenant; I will refer you to the Apostle, who propounded and answered this Question for us, *Rom.* 3. 1, 2, *&c.* He had said in the close of the *Chapter* before, to cut off the vain confidence of those that did securely repose themselves in their External Priviledges, that he was not a *Jew*, that was one outwardly, *&c.* He was very sensible what Objection some would make at that time, therefore he propounds this Question, and returns a free Answer, *What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?* I Answer with the Apostle, first generally, *Much every way*; and

and then particularly, *chiefly, because unto them were committed the oracles of God*, &c. Thus say some, You stand stifly to this, that Children be in covenant with their Parents, and God hath taken them into covenant with them, but what are they the better for it? What advantage doth accrue unto them from thence? I Answer, *Much every way.* Methinks the Spirit of God foreseeing how the Covenant, and the Infant-right in it, would be infringed, and invaded in the Times of the Gospel, did inspire the Apostle here to contradict, and oppose those bold Usurpers, that should attempt to make Breaches upon the Lords sacred Incloſure. I could shew in many particulars the wonderful advantage that those have, that are but externally in covenant, above those that are not, and what an ineſtimable Favour and Blessing it is to be within the Pale of the Covenant. I shall mention some of the chief Priviledges that such do enjoy.

1. They have the Excellent Oracles of God repoſited among them, and committed unto them; this was the Priviledge of the *Jews in propatulo*, and their great advantage, which did distinguish them from the rest of the World, and represented them to all Nations to be a peculiarly happy and dignified People, *Rom.* 3. 2. *Much every way: chiefly, because unto them were commited the oracles of God.* This the Lord himself declares to be one of their singular Prerogatives, *Deut.* 4. 8. *And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgements so righteous, as all this law which I set before you this day?* Psal. 147. 19, 20. *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and judgements unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation: as for his judgements, they have not known them.* Therefore from the sense of this wonderful Blessing, the *Psalmist* cries out, *Praise ye the Lord.* To have the custody of Gods Ordinances, and the

the use of them, the Word, Sacraments, Worship, Ministry, Pastors after Gods own Heart, and all the Service of God. Who can express or declare, how happy the People are, that have such Depositions, and are so distinguish'd, and magnify'd, as to have the Means of Grace, in and by which they may come to know and learn the Mind of God; to have Ordinances, wherein they may draw nigh to God; to have a Membership and visible Standing in that Society, where Salvation is ordinarily dispensed, *John* 4. 22. *For salvation is of the Jews.* There were the Means, and no where else, not among the *Samaritans*; hence the Law was called *the inheritance of the congregation of* Jacob, *Deut.* 33. 4. Certainly those that understand in any competent measure, the Excellency of this Priviledge, cannot but adore, and admire God in it, and magnifie his Name for it.

2. Such that be but outwardly in covenant are part of, and go to make up the *Vineyard* of the Lord, they be planted in the Lords *Vineyard*, they be part of the *Garden* of the Lord, hedg'd in, and separated from the rest of the World, and God doth own them to be so. It is no small benefit to be within the Pale of the Church, and to have a fix'd Standing in *Zion*, Isa. 5. 7. *For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant.*

3. They have the Proposals and the Offers of the highest Mercy, they live under the Overtures of the richest Grace, they be in the Kingdom, and are the Children of the Kingdom; therefore have the highest Tenders, and the choicest Invitations to the best of Mercies. They are in the Kingdom, and Salvation is nigh unto them, the Bosom and the Arms of Grace and Love are always before their Eyes, and ready to receive and embrace them. After the Days of the Messiah, the *Jews* being in covenant with God, their

happy

happy Estate was not to be overlook'd, but to be honourably respected, therefore they had the first offer of Life, and Salvation by Christ after his Ascension. So it was in *Acts* 2. and in other places, *Acts* 3. 25, 26. *Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.* They were yet in covenant, and the Lords *Vineyard*, and had this precious Tender of Christ, and Salvation by him, sent unto them to bring them to Faith and Repentance, before it was sent unto the poor out-cast *Gentiles*, Acts 13. 46. *Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should have first been spoken unto you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge your selves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.* *Paul* the great Apostle of the *Gentiles* did not betake himself to them, till his Embassy was rejected by the *Jews*, unto whom he was to make his Application. Our gracious Lord when he gave Commission to his Apostles; to Preach Repentance, and Remission of Sins in his Name, directed that they should begin at *Jerusalem*. Oh! how was his Heart upon his Covenant-people, and how unwilling was he, that their Covenant-State should expire; therefore he waited upon them to the utmost period of the time, set for the Patience of God to attend them. Oh! Go, said he, break up, and execute your Commission in that bloody City, see if they will Repent and Believe, that I may not lay them wast. The *Jews* (as is well observed by one) had a double Priviledge before Christ came; they were [*Soli*,] they were *alone*, they were the only Church and People of the Lord and inclosed from all the

Nation

Nations of the World; there was a Partition-wall erected between them, and the ſpurious part of the World. And at the Aſcenſion of Chriſt, and the Tenders and Exhibitions of the Grace of Life, and Salvation, they were [*Primi*,] they had the firſt Effort of Mercy ſent and directed unto them.

4. Such have their dwelling, and reſidence, where the gracious and peculiar Preſence of the Lord is to be enjoy'd; ſuch have an Habitation where God hath fixt his Throne of Grace, and where are his delightful Walks, the gracious preſence of the Lord is with his Church and People; thoſe that are his Covenant-Ones, they have the Signs, and the Symbols of his reſidence in the midſt of them. His general Preſence by a glorious Extenſion diffuſeth and diſpoſeth it ſelf every where; but This is the alone Happineſs of his ſelect People to enjoy, *Deut.* 4. 7. *For what nation is there ſo great, who hath God ſo nigh unto them?* Great, becauſe nigh. *Pſal.* 76. 1, 2. *In Judah is God known: his name is great in Iſrael. In Salem alſo is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion.* Viz. His peculiar place of reſidence, *Rev.* 21. 3. *And I heard a great voice out of heaven, ſaying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they ſhall be his people, and God himſelf ſhall be with them, and be their God.* Where the Tabernacle of God is, himſelf is, and there he will dwell. How happy are they that dwell where God in a diſtinct manner doth dwell! And this is the Happineſs of all thoſe that dwell within the Bounds of the Covenant.

5. Thoſe that be in covenant, and are Members of the Church, are always comprehended in, and have the benefit of having a ſhare in the Prayers that are continually aſcending up unto God for all *Iſrael*. As it is the Duty of every ſincere and true Believer to make Supplications for himſelf,

and

and to offer up this Sacrifice to God with the publick Assembly; so to be sure to be very mindful of *Zion*, and to be very importunate with the Lord for all the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, Psal. 122. 6, 7. *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.* There is a continual Cloud of Prayers going up to Heaven for those that are the Lords Inclosure, for all that are the Dwellers therein; every one, that is internally in covenant, will be sure to pray for all that are any way in Federal Relation to God, *Psal.* 137. 5, 6. *If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.* There is a continual Stock of Prayer treasuring up for the Church of God, in which the Infant Seed of Believers have no small Share. What an unspeakable Benefit is this? To have an Interest in the many Thousands, that dwell at the Throne of Grace, always putting God in mind of, and pleading with him the Covenant, Day and Night, for all those that are within the compass of it.

6. The Election of Grace, doth eminently run among, and through the Lords Covenant-Ones; God hath his Election eminently amongst them; the Golden Veins of Election are chiefly laid and disposed in the Visible Church; there he some to gather in, and some to build up, when the Lord hath gather'd up and called in his Elect in any Place, or among any People, he will cast away the rest: When all the Mine of Election is spent, then God departs, and transplants his Gospel, and pitcheth his Tabernacle elsewhere; he knows where the secret Veins (of those that are eternally chose by him) are to be found: He forsook the Places where the Seven Churches of *Asia* had their residence, when he had brought forth all his Elect: The *Jews* were not to be rejected, till all

the Remnant of Gods Choice were secured, *Rom.* 11. 5, 7. *Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.* John 4. 22. ——*salvation is of the Jews.* Till God did pluck up the Boundaries the Election of Grace did ordinarily run in the *Jewish* Channel, though now and then in a very parsimonious manner, one from without might be brought in, as *Job*, the Eunuch, *&c.*

7. The Priviledge of a General Adoption appertains to those that be in covenant; there is a Special, and there is a General Adoption; and it is a great Favour to have a Standing where there is a General Adoption: This is so reckon'd by the Apostle, *Rom.* 9. 4. *Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the covenants.* This is a Blessing always attending the Covenant; hence it is that all such have such Names given to them that set out, and signifie their Adopting-relation unto God, their Great and Glorious Father. Let us a little consider what Terms of Filiation the Scripture doth cloath and adorn them with, which doth demonstrate that great Advancement that is confer'd upon them thereby. Nothing ought to be of a slight and extenuated Estimation with us that is greatly magnify'd and advanc'd in Divine Writ. The Body of those, that be in covenant with the Lord, though many, far remote and distant from any peculiar, Special and Internal Fraition, are called

(1.) The Sons of God. He is pleased to accept of the Title of a Father unto them, *Gen.* 6. 1. ——*the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair.* Thus we see how early (because of Covenant-relation) they bore this Denomination.

(2.) They be called the Children of the Lord. *Deut.* 14. 1. *Ye are the children of the Lord your God.*

God. They were brought forth in a Fœderal Bond, therefore the whole Mass and Body of them obtain'd this Appellation: The most Holy, and the most High God admitted them unto this tall Pinacle of Honour, of being his Children.

(3.) Hence it is that all *Israel* God doth call his *Son*, intimating how distinguishingly the Lord doth assume and appropriate him to himself in this near Relation, *Exod.* 4. 22. *And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my first-born.* This was to be used as a powerful Motive to prevail upon *Pharaoh*, to set *Israel* free from his cruel Bondage, he was the Lords. *Ver.* 23. *And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me*: Wilt thou be so bold, as to detain in bondage him, that I the Great and Terrible God do own, and declare to be my *Son*?

(4.) Hence *Ephraim* is called Gods *dear Son*. Covenant-relation is very near, and so very *dear* unto God: All those that are in covenant with him, are very near, and very *dear* unto him, *Jer.* 31. 20. *Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him.* Here is not only Relation, but Bowels of Affections: *Ephraim* is not only the Lords *dear Son*, but dearly and deeply beloved of God.

(5.) They be from hence called the Children of the Promise, *viz.* the Children of the Covenant. Those that have such an Interest and Title to the Promise, as to be called the Children of the Promise, being born within the Pale of the Covenant, they are the Heirs of the Promise descending of such Parents, that do convey the precious Inheritance unto them.

(6.) They be also called the Children of the Kingdom, born within the Covenant, and so brought forth in the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Christ in the World, where he as the

great King and Mediatour rules, and swayes the Scepter, *Mat.* 8. 12. We see that those here that shall for want of special grace, be cast out for ever, yet that doth not hinder their being in Covenant, they are the Children of the Kingdom. I might add to all these particulars that have toucht upon under this head, that because of this Covenant-relation, we read of Childrens bread. Them that are in Covenant, and in the Kingdom of God, they are the Children, and all the provisions of the Kingdom, in respect of the precious means of grace, are called Childrens bread; being most immediately and directly provided by their heavenly Father for them, *Mat.* 15. 26. *But he answered and said, it is not meet to take the Childrens bread, and to cast it to dogs.* These that were not in the Compass of the Covenant, were called dogs; the *Jews* were the Children, they being within; the *Gentiles* in comparison of them, were like unto dogs being without.

(8.) Those that be in Covenant are honoured with high and glorious Titles; and if we consider what is the nature and dignity of them, we may see that they are not purely Titular, but are such that do import some rare and renowned Privilege; I shall name some of these Titles that be ascribed unto them. (1.) Holy, those that be in Covenant (although but externally so) are called holy, *Deut.* 14. 2. *For thou art a holy people to the Lord thy God*, a people separated to God from the rest of the World, the Covenant is holy, and those that are inclosed within it are a holy People, they are the Lords holy, separated ones. This we have translated into the new Testament upon the new Administration of the Covenant. 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. *For the unbelieving Husband is sanctified by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is sanctified by the Husband: else were your Children unclean, but now are they holy.* Strange violence is

offered

offered to this Text, to destroy that federal holiness that shines forth in it. The *Anabaptists* (one would think) are put greatly to their shifts, in shifting off the force of this Text from them; when all that they will allow Believers from this Text is, that if one Parent be but a Believer, then they will free their Children from the foul charge, and scandalous imputation of being Bastards: Thus they comment upon the words *else were your Children* Bastards, but now they be Legitimate, lawfully begotten; what must be the consequence of this, but that the Children of those Parents neither of which is a Believer must, tho' they be never so lawfully Married, and live never so chastly together, be Bastards; what a multitude of the off-spring of this our Nation, must after this interpretation be illegitimate, and a spurious bastardly Brood: This hath been so often confuted, that I will say no more to it, the very naming of it may be a sufficient confutation of it. (2.) A peculiar people, a people set a part from others; the Covenant is for an enclosure, and so for a separation of some from the rest of the World, to be distinct, and peculiar from others, *Deut.* 14. 2. *For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself above all the nations that are upon the earth.* The Lord hath a visible people that are to him a peculiar people, they are his Church, those that are in a peculiar Covenant-appropriation unto Him. We have this Title and that before of *Holy* ascribed to those that are under the Administration of the Covenant in new Testament times. 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar people.* (3) They be called Gods Houshold or Family: the worship of God, and the blessing of the Covenant first took place in Families, and those were the Families of the Lord; since the more open,

publick and diffusive dispencing of the Covenant, those that are the Lords Covenant ones, retain still the Title of a Family and Houshold, and so this is brought down unto the time of the Gospel, *Gal.* 6.10. *As we have therefore opportunity let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the houshold of faith*, Viz. Gods Covenant-houshold, *Eph.* 2. 19. *Now therefore we are no more strangers and foreiners, but fellow Citizens, and of the houshold of God*; those *Gentiles* that were not in Covenant, and so not of the Houshold of God. Now saith the Apostle, you are made partakers of the Covenant, which was the peculiar Blessing of the *Jews*, and ye are become now of the Houshold of Faith, and of God, or of the Houshold of Faith, and so of God; you are grafted into the Olive, and this is some of the sweet and precious fat and juice of it. (4.) Such be called Gods Vineyard, or the garden of the Lords, surely it is a Singular Priviledge to be planted in the Lords Vineyard, and not to have a standing without in the Wilderness of the World, which the Lord hath little regard for, or care of, *Isa.* 5. 1, 7. *Now I will sing to my well beloved, a song of my beloved touching his Vineyard: My well beloved hath a Vineyard in a very fruitful hill; For the Vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant.* The Church of God in Covenant with Him is by the Lord Jesus, the Husband and Bridegroom of it delightfully called a garden, it being the sweetest, the most pleasant and fertilest spot in all the World, *Cant.* 4. 12, 16. *A garden enclosed is my Sister, my Spouse; Awake, Oh north-wind, and come thou south, and blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.* Cant. 5. 1. *I am come into my garden, my Sister, my Spouse,* Cant. 6. 2. *My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather Lilies.* Thus was the Church of the *Jews* that was the Lords

lords Covenant-inclosure stiled, *Zach.* 2. 5. Therefore particular Churches that make up the Church Catholick, are called golden Candlesticks, *Rev.* 1. 20. *The mystery of the seven Stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden Candlesticks, are the seven Churches*: The Lord Jesus walks in the midst of them, they are the place of his feet, and his delightful walks, *Rev.* 2. 1. *He walketh in the midst of the seven golden Candlesticks*, to shew his delight that he hath in them, the peculiar watch of his Providence about them, and his plentiful and his inexhaustible supplying of them. Oh how good is it to dwell where Christ hath his continual residence, and his perpetual walks: 'tis a comfortable thing to have the Lord of infinite grace, to walk constantly to, and fro, by ones door; how soon may he open the door and come in, and bring his Blessed retinue of peace, mercy, grace, and love along with him. (6.) The Church of Christ involv'd in this Covenant, is called Heaven, this is Heaven upon Earth, where the Throne of the blessed God is fixt; when the Lord takes Believers and their Children into Covenant with himself, he takes them into Heaven; those that be out of Covenant do inhabit such darkness, as to represent those that are even in Hell. I, but the Church of God that hath the light of the Word, and grace of God, shining upon it, is Gods heaven below, *Rev.* 12. 1. *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman cloathed with the Sun.* This wonder was seen in the Church of God below, I, but here called Heaven for her trampling upon the World, having the righteousness of Christ begirt about her, and living in the Starry Region of Evangelical and Divine light.

Thus I have in some Particulars endeavoured, to discover something of the Priviledges of those, that be in Covenant with the Lord from this head:

I come to another Priviledge which is this, that many of them that are thus in Covenant shall be saved, a multitude of them are Elected, for here chiefly lyes the secret Mine of Election, where many shall be called, and Effectually brought home to God; the great Bulk and Mass of the Elect are taken, and dug out of the Loins of Believers, that are brought under Covenant, many of those that be in Covenant shall be sure be to saved; therefore surely 'tis a great priviledge to have a standing among those that shall be saved; how is it the duty of those that do enjoy this mercy to bless the Lord for it, and to improve it for their own Childrens advantage: 'Tis good to have a footing and dwelling in that Body, out of which the Lord doth call many to saving grace and glory, to be in the best capacity and the most hopeful disposition as to Externals for life and Salvation. The Soveraign Grace of God calls whom he pleaseth; but most frequently the lot of Salvation, falls upon the Children of Covenant Ones, they are the most hopeful to partake of that great blessing of the Covenant of effectual calling, and of having the Law of God to be ingraven upon their hearts, *Isa.* 54. 13. *And all thy Children shall be taught of the Lord.* Those that are not in Covenant with the Lord, as they do not regard, so neither are they under such a hopeful expectation of the accomplishment of such a promise, as those are, that are themselves the Children of the Promise, who have good right to approach unto the gracious Throne, and plead such a promise with him that sits there with the Rain-bow of the Covenant about his head.

10. This is the great ground, that is administred unto pious Parents, greatly concerned about the external good of the Souls of their little Ones, to build their hopes upon; godly Parents, would cast out the Anchor of hope upon a firm

firm ground, such that may hold; and this is the great, if not the only one, those the Lord is pleased to bereave them of, and demand out of their tender bosoms, this may quiet their hearts about their death, and their eternal State. So that upon this account, a Parent may say more then what one said of a dead Child, *Ego in illo puero nihil habeo præter dilectum*, he may compose, and sedate his Spirit with *David*, who while his Child was sick, did fast, and weep, refusing to eat; I, but when the pleasure of the Lord was signified by his death, he could arise, wash and eat, and go to the house of the Lord, and calmly pour out his sincere devotions unto the most high, saying unto them that were struck into stupendous admiration of his great change, I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me. Surely *David* had a further prospect than the grave that prevailed upon him to this Sedate composure, and Serenity of mind, he did intimate that his heart was at rest as to his felicity above; that his Soul (that he was most concerned about) had made its escape from the sick and painful Body, into *Abrahams* bosom: the great Covenant Father, he having this heart-supporting promise, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed*: This is Gospel and a man interested in this promise may, nay is bound to lay hold upon it, and to cast himself upon the promise, as well for his little Ones, as for himself. Wherefore hath the Lord, as an Instance of his unsearchable grace, given such a promise, if not in our great and close afflictions to be choice, and suitable food, for our faith? [illegible] but this can support Parents when they see their tender Infants in the bitter bonds of death, reclining their heads upon their dissolving Pillows, and having their Bowels to be sounding and yearning within them. Now this, I would humbly demand, what they can build their hopes upon, to make them readily

to comply with Divine Pleasure? When the Souls of their Little Ones sit upon their Lips, to take their flight into an Eternal Ocean, that excludes them out of that Covenant, they be confident they themselves be in, and upon which they bottom and center all their trust and confidence as to their own Salvation; for the ordinary way of Salvation is by and through the Covenant.

11. Those that be in covenant thus have many great and temporal Blessings bestow'd upon them, which others fall short of; they share in the peculiar Providential Care, and Watch of God; there is the general Providential Care of God, which as he is an Omnipresent Majesty, filling all Places, Persons, and Things, with his Essential Presence, out of which there can be no departing, or absconding, he doth extend unto all, *Psal.* 139. 7, 8, 9, 10. But moreover there is the peculiar Transmission of the Providential Care, Observation and Tuition of God, and this is that which every Moment doth environ and encircle the Church and Covenant-Ones round about, and all that are interested in the same stand possest with the free fruition of, they are the proper Objects of the peculiar and special Providential Watch of God, *Psal.* 121. 4. *Behold, he that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep.* This denotes the careful and the diligent keeping of the Church, the Lord is ever in the exercise of, as one saith, *Curam, solicitudinem & diligentiam connotat, nec dormit nec dormitat,* He neither sleeps nor slumbers. The Lord sets a peculiar Fence about his Church, *Isa.* 5. 2. *And he fenced it,* —— After he planted it, he set the Fence of his peculiar Providence round about it, to preserve it, *Isa.* 27. 3. *I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.* Thus we see what a peculiar Vigilancy the Divine Eye doth exhibit unto the Covenant-

People:

People: This is no ſmall Priviledge, to have a Place with thoſe that are thus beautify'd. I might have added, that ſuch have many outward Favours of Peace, Plenty, and Proſperity, and that People, Places, and Nations, do enjoy many rare Mercies for their ſake; the Old World ſped the better for *Noah*'s ſake, *Sodom* for *Lot*'s, *Pharaoh* for *Joſeph*'s, as *Obed-edom* for the Arks ſake, and *Laban* was greatly bleſſed for the ſake of *Jacob*. A Nation ſpeeds the better for the Goſpels ſake; moſt fare the better for the Elect, the greateſt Body of which deſcend from Covenant-Ones: Temporal Bleſſings are the Appendices of that Covenant made with *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. where the *Land of Promiſe* was inſerted, though a far greater in that was intended, as hath been ſhewn. More Priviledges might have been convened unto theſe; but let what hath been ſaid ſuffice, and I think what hath been inſiſted upon may ſatisfie as to this *Queſtion*. We have ſeen that thoſe that are in covenant have *advantage*, and that *much every way*.

But before we diſmiſs this, let us a little diſtinctly apply the Matter ſuitable to the diſtinction that I have laid down concerning the way of being in covenant, as to thoſe that be Externally, and thoſe that be Internally in it.

Obſerve heedfully here, that the ſame Promiſes that are to the Parents, are to the Children, *I will be their God, and the God of thy Seed*. Thoſe that the Lord is pleaſed to take into covenant with himſelf, ſome are Elect, and ſome not Elect; ſo amongſt the Children, ſome are Elect, and ſome not Elect; and here I chiefly mean thoſe that arrive unto the Years of the Adult.

1. Thoſe that be the Elect of the Natural Seed, they do partake both of the external, and internal part of the Covenant; for they do partake of the Promiſe in the extent of it, ſuch peculiar ſalvi-

Salvificable Bleſſings, as Juſtification, Adoption, Sanctification, *&c.* and Eternal Glorification; in a Word, they do partake of Temporal, Spiritual, and External Priviledges.

2. The Non-elect they do partake of the external part of the Promiſes, and of the Covenant-Priviledges (as have been mentioned) which be exceeding great, though not ſaving; therefore not to be relied and reſted upon. I ſhall here lay down Two *Poſitions*, that ſhall conclude this preſent Matter in hand.

(1.) That as God by the Election of Grace doth make the diſtinction among the Natural Seed of Covenanters with God, accordingly is their Childrens participation of the Promiſe. The Elect have the Promiſe in the extent, the other in the external part only, which in it ſelf is a Priviledge and a great Advantage. There might have been given great Inſtances of this in *Abraham's* Family, and others, but I forbear, and ſhall not need to ſtand upon it. There is the Elect *Iſaac*, the Covenant was eſtabliſht with him in all its Spiritual and External parts; and *Iſhmael* the Son of a Bond-woman in covenant, and muſt be circumciſed too, and participate of the Seal, and become a great Nation, and have a Standing till his time come to be caſt out.

(2.) That there is great ground, and very good foundation, for a Parent in covenant with God, to pray, and to hope for the accompliſhment of the Covenant in the extent of it. Pious Parents in covenant with God, ſhould labour to lay hold upon the gracious Promiſes thereof, and put them daily in ſuit at the Throne of Grace, pleading of them for their poor Children with God; Ay, and this ſhould be done with a great deal of hope, and that partly, becauſe the Purpoſe of God is ſecret, and not to be the Rule of our Covenant-Duties, and the Promiſe is open in the full and ample

ample Extent of it; and alſo becauſe Gods gracious Promiſe is ſo full, copious, and comprehenſive, as to be the God of the Seed of thoſe Parents he hath highly gratified, and graced, in taking them into covenant with himſelf; which Faith ought in the largeſt ſence to take hold upon, and ſwallow down, and to be warmly, and comfortably exerciſed about the inward, ſpiritual, and eternal Bleſſings of the Covenant for Children. But ſomewhat more of this, if the Lord pleaſe, in the Uſe of this Doctrine. Thus much for the firſt *General Thing*, Viz. *The opening of this Point:* Now we come unto the

II. *General Head* propoſed in my Method, which is to offer ſome *Demonſtrations*, to Evince the Truth of my *Doctrine*, and ſo we ſhall inſiſt upon the ὅτι of this *Great Truth.*

1. This hath ever been Gods way in covenanting with his People; this way God hath obſerved ever ſince the Fall, yea, this was the way that he took in the firſt Covenant that ever was concluded between him and Man, *viz.* The Covenant of Works that he made with *Adam* in innocency, in his perfect State; *Adam* and all his Poſterity were ſtrictly included in that Covenant; ſo that as it fared with him, it was to be with all, that were to deſcend from his Loyns, or all his Seed, he falling, all fell in him, and with him. Upon his Fall, the bleſſed Covenant of Grace (that was eternally provided through Chriſt the great Channel of the Grace of God) took place and was publiſhed with Gods own Lips, *Gen.* 3. 15. *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy ſeed and her ſeed: it ſhall bruiſe thy head, and thou ſhalt bruiſe his heel.* Here we have the Seed immediately comprehended; this I take to be the very ſame Covenant for ſubſtance, that

was

was made, and more fully explicated, confirmed, and established with *Abraham*; where was the first emanation and springing forth of the inexhaustible Fountain of Grace, through a Covenant for apostate and trembling *Adam*; who was capable of no other Covenant in that his miserable State: It was only naked, and pure Grace that could support him from sinking into eternal desperation, and destruction. Ever since the Fall of Man, God hath been pleased to gather a Church and People to himself by covenant, and he evermore hath taken in the Children with the Parents; when ever he hath made a Covenant with a Family, with a People, and with a Nation, he never excluded, and shut out the Children, and Seed, accounting the Children to be of that Family, People, or Kingdom: This might be abundantly proved, were it needful. We have fully seen it in the Lords covenanting with *Abraham*, taking in all his Natural Seed with him; a famous and obvious Instance hereof we have in *Deut.* 29. 9, 10, 11, 12. One would think, that this should for ever silence the *Opposers* of this Truth. Here we have the Adult, and all their Little Ones, standing before the Lord, to enter into covenant with him; the Little Ones were confederate with their Parents, and entered into covenant in, and with them; thus when the Covenant was carried over to the *Gentiles*, Children were still involved, as in our Text, *Acts* 2. 39. *For the promise is to you, and your children*: And so it shall be unto all *that are afar off*, when they shall be called, and brought home unto God, they shall come with their Children with them, and enter into covenant with the Lord, *Rom.* 11. 17, 19. If here Children of the *Gentiles* be not taken into the Covenant with the *Jews*, in the place of those that were broken off, then there would be no Analogy, or Proportion, between the

the rejection of one, and the acceptation of the other.

2. *Demonst.* This hath been Gods way in his conveying all saving Good unto the Elect; this is Gods ordinary way of communicating unto the Salvation of the Infants of Believers, they being actually in the Visible Church, and in covenant with God, out of which ordinarily no Salvation can be expected, and hoped for. All the Promises that be made to Infants of any Spiritual Blessing, conducting to their Eternal Happiness, are lodged in the Covenant; and the Promises are the Instruments of the Spirit of God, in its great Covenant-work of distilling, and infusing Grace into the Hearts of the Elect dying Infants. Even before the World began, God ordained and instituted all Good to be conveyed to us in a way, and by vertue of a Covenant; therefore 'tis called the *everlasting covenant*, and the *everlasting gospel*, Heb. 13. 20. *Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.* Rev. 14. 6. *And I saw another angel flie in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell upon the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.* This *everlasting gospel* I think may here be (though not exclusively, yet eminently) meant the Everlasting Covenant of Grace, through which in the preaching of it, is transmitted all saving Good to all the Elect, in all the Nations, Kingdoms, Kindreds, and Languages in the World. Nay, Christ himself, that unspeakable Gift, is all the Elects, both Infants, and Adult, in a way of a Covenant, *Isa.* 42. 6. *I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, and for a light of the Gentiles.* His Blood is

the

the Blood of the *everlasting covenant*, and there can be no Interest in it, nor in himself, but by way of Covenant; as there can be no Redemption, no Reconciliation, no Justification, no Sanctification, nor Salvation, but by and through his Blood; and that Blood is the Blood of the *everlasting covenant*, Zech. 9. 11. *As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, where there is no water.* Some do understand this of a temporal deliverance out of some great and grievous Affliction, which the Lord did deliver his People; if so, then certainly it must be by the *blood of the covenant*; by and through which the Elect are delivered out of all their *Pits*, and Miseries, into which their Sins have cast them. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Mediatour of the New Covenant, and if Infants be not in this Covenant, they can have no Interest in him, as Mediatour; for he is no Mediatour, but of such a Covenant: His great Business is to confirm a Covenant, to all such, to whom he is a Mediatour. Therefore to deny Infants being in covenant, is to shut them out of all hopes of partaking of one Drop of the Precious Blood of Christ, which is Covenant-Blood. And thus here is a dreadful Rock in the midst of that Ocean of Misery, that Sin hath brought them in, which poor Infants dying in their Infancy must unavoidably split upon for ever; moreover here we may see them all to have suffered Shipwrack, without the least part of a Wreck left them to swim to shore on. If it be so, that the Infants of Believers are excluded from Right in the Covenant, and the Promise of the Holy Ghost, and Remission of Sin, unless they do personally profess their Faith and Repentance, as the *Challenger* would have it, then they are out of all the ordinary way of Salvation, and desperately exposed to be lost for ever.

3. *Demonſt.* This hath been the way, that a holy and juſt God hath obſerved in ejecting, and caſting out of the Covenant. When Parents by their ſin have been diſinherited, and caſt out; their Children alſo have been turned out with them, we read of the breaking and taking in, *Rom.* 11. 17, 19. The one muſt expound the other, and one muſt be commenſurate and reſponſible to the other: otherwiſe the parallel, of the Holy Ghoſt, and the harmony of the matter will be broke. They which were broken off, were called natural branches; they and their natural Seed did grow upon this root, and both were broken off, not only the Parents, but the Children; God wrote upon them and their Children a *Loammi*. So when the Lord (thro' rich grace) did fill up their vacancy, and inſerted the *Gentiles* in their Room, in graffing them into the ſame Stock, making of them to partake of the root, and fatneſs of the Olive tree; it was they, the adult Parents that did believe, and all their Sprigs, their Children, that ſprang from them, that were graffed in. Here we muſt obſerve a meet Similitude in the rejection of the *Jews*, and the implantation of the *Gentiles*; look how the One was by unbelief broken off, ſo the others were taken in by Faith: but the one both Parents and Children were broken off thro' the ſtubborn rejection of the Covenant, not ſubmitting to the new Adminiſtration of it, when it was offered by the Apoſtles after the aſcenſion of the Meſſiah, which was expreſſed by the Parents only; therefore the *Gentiles* are inſerted with their Children, notwithſtanding the Parents only expreſs a Beleiving embracement of the Covenant, and the Promiſes thereof.

4. *Demonſt.* Children are Members of the viſible Church, where their Parents be in Covenant with God

God, they be initiated by Baptism, and admitted into visible Membership; the breaking off was the casting out of a visible Church, *Mat.* 19. 14. *But Jesus said, Suffer little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.* Our great Champion, will not have these to be little, in respect of the smalness of their growth, or littleness of their age, tho' it be never so ridiculous, and absurd to deny it; what will not rash men obtrude upon, to uphold their crude indigested notions. Observe a little here these be not only called Children, but little Children, *Luke* calls them Infants, *Chap.* 18. 15. *And they brought unto him also Infants that he would touch them, viz.* that he would bless them; they were such that were brought, or born to Christ, they could not come themselves: *then were there brought unto him little Children,* nay, they were so small, and little that the Disciples that attended upon their Lord, thought that they could only be a trouble to him, therefore they rebuked them that brought them; yea, and further 'tis said that Jesus took them up into his arms, when he laid his hands upon them, and blessed them; he took them out of their Parents arms, or the arms of them that brought them, when he blessed them, *Mar.* 10. 16. Yea one thing more fully to prove that Children are to be taken literally, and not allegorically, and that from the *Greek* word, that the Evangelist *Luke* makes use of, where 'tis said, that they brought unto him τὰ βρέφη, the word βρέφος, signifies a very little child Infants, *puer recens natus*, 1 Pet. 2. 2. *As new born Babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby:* The very same word we have for a Babe, yet unborn, and not injoying any habitation but the Womb, *Luke* 1, 41. *And it came to pass, that when Elizabeth heard the Salutation of Mary, the Babe leaped in her womb,* and so *ver.* 44. *the Babe leaped for joy!*

by! Oh how did our Neighbour lately abuse this precious Text, in his endeavouring to prove that which Christ will never thank him for, *Viz.* that Children are not capable of Habitual Faith: He would be thought a very great Scholar, tho' we well understand what University he was brought up in; but had he, or could he but have consulted the Original text, he would scarce have been so bold with Christ, as to have attempted to destroy his Love to Infants, and to have vented his cruelty to those, that he took up into his arms, to bless those that did hang upon the Breast, and were also brought in the arms of godly Mothers, that brought them forth unto Christ, to receive some Spiritual blessing. I do prefer the judgment of Learned and Critical *Beza*, before a thousand such Doctors as ours is: I will give you his sense of the words in *Luke ch.* 18. 5. and how he opens the words. There he tells us what these Infants are, these are his words, *Teneri nimirum et adhuc ab uberibus pendentes pueruli*, very little Children that hang upon the Breast, sucking Babes, which are carried in the arms. *Beza* adds something more and saith thus, *Est enim adversus hostes Paedo-baptismi servanda propria significatio verbi* βρέφη *et nominis* βρέφους, the proper signification of the words Infants, and that they were carried to Christ, and also that he took them into his arms, when he blessed them, must be kept. But I may have an opportunity to meet with my Adversary in a more suitable place: Thus we see what little things the Seed of Believers be, that are Members of the Church visible; for by Kingdom of Heaven is (by all judicious Divines) taken to be the visible Church: Now because they be declared by Christ himself to be such Members with their Parents, they must also with them be in Covenant with God.

5. *Demonst.* The Parents by Covenant do ingage themselves, and their Children unto God. When

Parents

Parents do enter into Covenant with the Lord, they do by the Bonds of the same, oblige themselves, and theirs unto the Lord, and to be the Lords for ever. Every Covenant-Parent does oblige himself, and his Seed to God, to walk according to the Covenant of Grace, to which the Initiating Seal of the Covenant is annext; and God doth promise to be his God, and the God of his Seed, *Gen.* 17. 7. Parents when they do dedicate their Children to God, by the Seal of the Covenant, then they do ingage to the utmost of their power, that they shall observe the Duties of the same: So Children when they are Adult, ought by Faith to lay a firm hold upon the Covenant, and answer the Obligation of their Parents. In a Federal Consideration, when Parents do ingage for their Children; this (as it hath always been) is accounted among the Judicious the Act of the Children, in, and by their Parents, and they are obliged strictly to the performance of the same. That Parents have thus ingaged for their Children in covenant with God, might be easily proved, *Deut.* 26. 17, 18. In which place Parents and their children are comprehended, as is more fully and specifically expressed in *Chap.* 29. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. There we have the little ones expressed, which are involved with their Parents in the former place. Some that are Adversaries herein, pretend to wonder how this can be; but what is more common among Men? In a Mans Covenant, do not Men put their Childrens Names in their *Writings Obligatory?* And their Little Ones, and those unborn, shall *stand firmly obliged* thereby; and the Law doth take it as *firm*, as if the Child had actually bound himself. A little to Illustrate and Invigorate this; We are to consider that the Children when grown up, and prove sinful, walking contrary to the Covenant, yea, and those that never

never did receive the Token of the Covenant by Circumciſion, ſtand accuſed of the *high Charge* of breaking the Covenant, which is an Evident Proof of their being (when but Infants) in covenant; otherwiſe this *Charge* could not be ſo clearly exhibited againſt them, *Deut.* 29. 25. *The men ſhall ſay, Becauſe they have forſaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers*; Viz. the Covenant which the Lord God made with their Fathers. This you have but a few *Verſes* before, to demonſtrate that it was that Covenant the Lord made with the Parents and their Little Ones that ſtood before him, to covenant with him, 1 *Kings* 19. 10, 14. You may ſee what Covenant this was, 2 *Kings* 13. 23. *And the Lord was gracious unto them, and had compaſſion on them, and had reſpect unto them, becauſe of his covenant with Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, and would not deſtroy them, neither caſt he them from his preſence*: Yet they had broken this Covenant, and for the Covenant's ſake, they deſcending from the *Fathers*, and being the Seed of thoſe, with whom he had made this Covenant, he would not enter upon them for the breach they made upon it, to extinguiſh or to deſtroy them, as yet. It was the Covenant that did bind up and reſtrain the Hands of Juſtice from caſting off the *Jews*, the Children of the *Fathers*, and of the Covenant; therefore the Lord is ſaid, *Pſal.* 111. 5. —— *He will ever be mindful of his covenant.* Gen. 17. 14. *And the uncircumciſed man-child whoſe fleſh of his fore-skin is not circumciſed, that ſoul ſhall be cut off from his people: he hath broken my covenant.* Surely if the Seed of Parents in covenant are accuſed for the breaking of the Covenant, they themſelves muſt be in covenant, and obliged by their Parents to keep it.

6. *Demonſt.* Such as God is pleaſed to account and accept as holy, are in covenant. Thoſe that have a Foederal Holineſs muſt be Foederates, and

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such that be in covenant with the Lord; but this is the great Blessing of those that are the Children of believing Parents; there is a Holiness attributed to them, that is not to the Seed of *Pagans*, and *Infidels*, and it is a Covenant-Holiness; therefore it must follow by undeniable consequence, That *they are in covenant with their Parents*. What makes *Israel*, and his Seed, more holy than the *Egyptians*, or *Canaanites*, and their Seed, but God's taking one into covenant, and not the other? Thus *Israel* and his Seed are said to be *holy*, Deut. 14. 2. *For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God*. If but one Parent be in covenant, the Children be accepted as holy with the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. Because of this, the Children are not unclean as the *Canaanites*, but holy like the *Israelites*. I have spoke something to this in the Explication of this *Point*, therefore shall hasten over it; it would be to small purpose to enter into the Miry Labyrinth, wherein some have lodg'd this *precious Scripture*: I shall only say this (with an Acute Person,) That commonly Reasons of *Positions* are brought *à notiori*, to prove a thing doubtful by a thing known, yeilded, or confest; this I judge to be a granted and a well-known *Truth*, as one of the *Jews* Divine *Axioms*: But that none but Believers Children are Legitimate, and that none but Believers have a lawful use of their Children, which are the two usual Expositions of the *Adversaries* on that Text, which to me seems very jejune, and spurious; those will hardly pass for unquestionable *Truths* among the wisest of Men; And to make the Apostle argue thence to prove the lawful continuance of the Believer, in conjugal Society with the Unbeliever, would make the Apostle guilty of proving *obscurum per obscurius*, an obscure thing by that which is more dark and obscure: But to take Holiness there, for that which is Fœderal, that is a clear

Medium

Medium to prove that; and whoſoever ſhall ſtand up and oppoſe it, there is the Diſpenſation of the Covenant with *Iſaac* all along, and that continued in the *Chriſtian* Churches to prove it. *Your Children are holy*, Viz. Heirs to the Covenant, a known Truth, then granted and allow'd by all, even like unto our Text, That *the Covenant was to the Parents, and their Children.* How can the Children of Believers be ſaid to be holy, if they be not in covenant with their Parents? From whence all the Seed of Believers do receive the denomination, *Rom.* 11. 16. *For if the firſt-fruit be holy, the lump is alſo holy: and if the root be holy, ſo are the branches.* The Root is *Abraham*, and the *Fathers*, and they may be ſaid to be the Firſt-fruits, becauſe they were firſt conſecrated to God; and the Branches are denominated from the Root, *Exod.* 19. 6. *And ye ſhall be unto me a kingdom of prieſts, and an holy nation.* Here the whole Nation was called holy: How could it be called ſo? Not becauſe all the Individuals of the Nation were perſonally holy, partaking of a ſaving Work of Holineſs upon their Hearts: There were but a few ſuch: But becauſe as a Nation the Adult, and Children were in covenant with the Lord; for the Children were no ſmall part of the Nation. We have this very *Phraſe* conferred upon the *Chriſtian* Church, in the Times of the Goſpel, 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. *But ye are a choſen generation, a royal prieſthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people.* Believing *Gentiles*, with their Seed, were ingrafted into the ſame Place from whence the *Jews* were broken off, and are become *a holy nation* unto God.

7. *Demonſt.* Thoſe unto whom the Promiſes of the Covenant are made, and do appertain; they are in Covenant with the Lord: Some time the Covenant is expreſt by the Promiſe as in our Text,

and

and the Covenant of Promiſe, the gracious promiſes of the word are the branches of the Covenant of grace : Some do ſtile the Covenant a Collection or bundle of Promiſes which God hath bound up, and conferred (through Chriſt) upon his People, unto which there are annext the duties of the Covenant, unto the performance: Of which there is proviſion made in the ſame Covenant of grace, and divine aſſiſtance: But the promiſes of the Covenant are made to the Children of thoſe, that are themſelves in Covenant, as well as to the parents; it ſeems to be very cruel and irrational to turn thoſe out of the Covenant, unto whom are aſſured the gracious promiſes of it, not only Temporal and external, but Spiritual and eternal bleſſings are promiſed unto the Children of Believers. Thoſe that are the oppoſers of this truth, muſt firſt Obliterate all the Promiſes that are comprehended in the Covenant, as the inheritance of the Seed of the Parents that themſelves are in Covenant with the Lord. As to any common ordinary rule appointed to us, belonging to our duties and hopes concerning our off-ſpring; we have nothing (as I know) to build upon, but Covenant promiſes: What an excellent one is our Text unto pious Parents, as to their Children; and in this it is founded, for the Promiſe is to you, and your Children. To illuſtrate and amplifie this, I ſhall in ſeveral particulars ſhew you ſome of the Ranks of Covenant-Promiſes, that are extended unto ſuch little Ones, that are the undoubted Proprietors of them.

(1.) That great and Capital promiſe, of the Lords being their God, this comprehends all the reſt, and is *inſtar omnium*. Is not this Promiſe, made to the Seed, of Believers, wrote in Capital Letters in many places, in the word of God? This is Gods great record in the Covenant of grace; and the great foundation the Church of

God

God is built upon; (*viz.*) this of Gods promiſing to be the God of his people, and of their Seed in every age, and generation of time, yea, to the end of the World, *uſq; ad conſummationem omnium*, unto the compleating and fulfilling of all things. Thus the bleſſed conſtitution, and promulgation of the Covenant hath alwayes run; this is wrote with a *Noverint univerſi*. That which every one under the ſound of the Goſpel ſhould know and underſtand; yea, even thoſe that are but raw, and rudely inſtructed in the very Principles and Rudiments of Religion. This gracious promiſe, is the golden Frontis-piece of this Covenant. The heart of God was ſo full of grace and love, to the Seed of the faithful, that when he called *Abraham* to eſtabliſh his Covenant, the fountain of his grace, did immediately emit this ſacred, ſweet, and moſt refreſhing Stream, *Viz. That I will be thy God and the God of thy Seed*; and that in all Succeſſions and periods of time, unto the utmoſt bound and period of all, read the Scriptures following, *Gen.* 17. 7. *Jer.* 24.7. and 31. 33. and 32.38. *Ezek.* 11. 20. and 34. 24, 31. *Chap.* 36. 28. *Chap.* 37. 27. *Mat.* 22. 27. 2 *Cor.* 6. 17, 18. Theſe rare promiſes muſt be expung'd out of the Book of God, before I can, (unleſs left by God to fall into error;) put this Article out of my Creed, that the Children of Believers naturally Springing from their Loins are in the Covenant with them. I have ſpoke much already to prove that the Covenant in *Gen.* 17.7. made unto *Abraham*, did referre to the Covenant of Grace. Some may be making of ſome Query, about that; becauſe they ſee, what muſt be the Conſequence of granting of it. Wherefore I would deſire them to return back unto what hath been ſaid upon that Point: Only I will add one or two things here. (1.) In this form run the promiſes (which are acknowledged by all, that know any thing) of the

Gospel-Covenant, or Covenant of grace; let all the places of Scripture, immediately here before mentioned, be examined as to the Phrase of them, *I will be a God to you*, or your God; *and you my people*, which includes Believers and their Seed: Now in as much as this in the 17. of *Gen.* runs in the same Phrase of the Covenant of grace that we see in other places that are allowed to be such, we may conclude, that such is this also. Doctor *Ames* saith thus against *Bellar. Omnia illa quæ spectant ad novum fœdus eadem phrasi summatim explicantur.* So that when we are challenged to prove the Covenant with *Abraham*, to be a Covenant of grace, and Circumcision to be a Seal of the Covenant of grace; Note that in this Point we have to do with our old Adversaries the *Papists*, tho' marching forth under the banner of a People of another Denomination; for their Doctrine as to the Covenant made with *Abraham*, in the place mentioned, is thus, that it was a Covenant of outward blessings, this is indeed the Doctrine of the worst of them, thus saith *Bellar. Legimus Deum promisisse Abrahamo, quando illi injunxit Circumcisionem, terrena tantùm ad literam*, i. e. *propagationem posteritatis, & terram palestinæ.* Again, *illis verbis, ero Deus tuus, significat totum promissum peculiaris protectionis.* Thus we may see, that our great disputant doth sweetly lick up the Doctrine of this great Doctor of the Church of *Rome*, tho' to give him his due, I believe he is not overmuch versed in him; to which Doctor *Ames* answers, *Legimus benedictionem illam Abrahamo promissionem fuisse plane eandem cum illâ, quâ jam fideles ex gentibus justificabantur.* Gal. 3. Now when the Holy Ghost testifies in Scripture every where, that the Gospel-Covenant runs in that form; why should we fall in with the *Papists*, and take their word for it, that that is no Gospel Covenant? But let us hearken to Christ, the best Expositor and applyer

plyer of Scripture, who is the Substance and infallible Oracle of all divine truths, *Mat.* 22. 31,32. *But* (saith he) *touching the Resurrection of the dead, have ye not read, what was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living*; where our Saviour affirms, that the present glorification of *Abraham*'s, *Isaac*'s and *Jacob*'s Spirits and the future Resurrection of their bodies, to live with God, both Soul and body for ever, to be included in that Promise, and the very accomplishment of that promise, *I am the God of Abraham*, &c. Hence this clearly appears to be a Covenant of grace, of Spiritual and eternal Blessings.

(2.) The promise of the Spirit is made to the Children of those Parents, that be in Covenant; therefore they must be also in Covenant. Such unto whom God promiseth his own Spirit, their's is the promise and Covenant of grace; for that is a Covenant of promise, *Ezek.* 36. 26. *A new heart will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you*, ver. 27. *And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my ways.* The promise of the Spirit is one of the most gracious promises that the Covenant of grace is inriched withall. Christ and the Spirit are the two Emphatical promises. When Christ was upon the earth, and hastning towards his ascension, this was the great promise that he made to be left behind him; and this is the promise that by the gracious gift of God doth appertain to the Children of those that are in Covenant with the Lord, *Isa.* 44. 3. *For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground, I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring*; Little Children that spring like little twigs from their parents, that be graffed into the Covenant: *Chap.* 59. 21. *As for me, this is my*

Covenant with them, ſaith the Lord, My ſpirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put into thy mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeed, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeeds ſeed, ſaith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever. Here is a bleſſed Promiſe to the Parents, and the Children, of this rare Priviledge of the Spirit, with a perpetual Entail, *Acts* 2. 38, 39. *Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jeſus, for the remiſſion of ſins, and ye ſhall receive the gift of the holy Ghoſt. For the promiſe is unto you, and to your children*; Viz. The Promiſe of Remiſſion of Sin, and of the Holy Ghoſt. The Truth is, Dying Infants without this Promiſe could never be ſaved.

(3.) The Promiſe of Regeneration belongs to ſuch Children. Such to whom the Lord promiſeth Regeneration, and Renovation, muſt needs be in covenant, to them doth belong the Promiſe and Covenant of Grace, for that is a Bleſſing of the Covenant of Grace, *Ezek.* 36. 26. *A new heart alſo will I give unto you, and a new ſpirit will I put within you, and I will take away the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and I will give you an heart of fleſh.* This doth expreſly ſet forth the Work of the Holy Spirit, in renewing, and ſanctifying, and regenerating the Hearts of the Elect; this is that which is promiſed to the Off-ſpring of thoſe in covenant with the Lord; therefore they themſelves muſt alſo be in covenant, *Deut.* 30. 6. *And the Lord thy God will circumciſe thy heart, and the heart of thy ſeed to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy ſoul.* The Seal of Circumciſion, the Token of the Covenant, did eminently ſignifie, and Aſſure this to all the Elect Infants that were in covenant; therefore Regeneration and Sanctification are oftentimes ſet forth by Circumciſion, and when the Lord calls for them, he doth it under the Name and Notion of Circumciſion:

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This might have been evidenced by many place[s]. Without this Promiſe, and the accompliſhment of it in the Hearts of dying Infants, they can never be ſaved; for thoſe Scriptures that exclude all unſanctified Perſons out of the Kingdo[m] of Heaven, are as applicable to the young Children, as to thoſe that are the moſt Adult. I need not ſtand to call in here any of thoſe many Scriptures that have ſet an unmovable Barre before the Gate of Heaven, againſt all unſanctified Sinners.

(4.) The Promiſe of being taught of God is an Excellent Promiſe of the Covenant of Grace; thoſe that do partake of a Standing in this Covenant, this is one of the Evangelical Promiſes that they are entituled unto, thoſe ſhall have a greater Teacher than Man, *viz.* they ſhall be taught of God, and by his Spirit. This is the Promiſe that is made with ſuch Infants, that are in covenant with their Parents, though ſome do ſcornfully ſay, What can they learn? Or what are they capable to be taught? Let ſuch know, that they have reaſonable Souls; and God by his Spirit can eaſily teach them, and they be under the promiſe of being taught of God, *Jer.* 31. 34. *And they ſhall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, ſaying, Know the Lord: for they ſhall all know me, from the leaſt of them unto the greateſt.* God can teach the leaſt Infant to know him, *Iſa.* 54. 13. *And all thy children ſhall be taught of the Lord.* Let us conſider can any but thoſe that be taught of God be admitted unto the Eternal Injoyment of God: He will take no ignorant Sinner into the company of the Glorifi'd. It is ſaid of *Timothy*, that from a Child he knew the holy Scriptures, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. Every one of you (I preſume) will readily grant, that his Knowledge was ſaving, and that he was effectually taught of God; and I muſt tell you, that he was very little when firſt he was

ght, and this will appear, if we consider the *Word* in the Text, *And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures* ἀπὸ βρέφους —— *from his infancy.* Some that be learned and critical do tell us, that the *Word* doth signifie the very *Embryo* in the Womb. God is able to teach and to sanctifie there —*propriè dicitur de partu recèns edito*, a Child so soon as brought forth of the Womb. It is an easie matter for God to fulfil the Excellent Promises of the Covenant, and to cause the Babe that falls out of the Womb, to fall into the Arms of Grace, and he that sucks on the Breast to draw in the Heavenly Knowledge of Christ; otherwise how can many be taken from the Breast and the Womb to Heaven, as doubtless a Multitude of Covenant-Babes are?

(5.) The Promise of Justification, and the Remission of Sin, is an Excellent Promise of the Covenant of Grace: The Blood of Christ is assured in this Fœderal Mercy, not only to wash away the Filth, but also to remove the guilt of Sin. Pardon of Sin is one of the most desirable Branches of this Covenant, there can be no obtaining the pardon of one Sin without it; all the Promises of pardon are founded upon the Grace of God, and satisfaction made to Divine Justice by the Blood of the Son of God, whose Blood is the Blood of the *Everlasting Covenant.* I shall not stand to mind you of the many Promises that we have of Remission; the Word of God doth abound with them, and wheresoever you find any of them, you may conclude, that they do relate to the Covenant of Grace. Now the Covenant-Seed of those that be Believing Parents, have a share in those Promises that hold out a Free and Full pardon of Sin, *Acts* 2. 38, 39. *Repent, and be baptized every one,* &c. *for the remission of sins, For the promise is to you, and your Seed,* Viz. That Promise and Covenant that hath made provision for

for the Remiſſion of your Sin, and the Sin of your Children; for they had involved their Children into the guilt of their Sin, but in the Covenant there is pardon for both, *Iſa.* 45. 24, 25. *Surely, ſhall one ſay, In the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength. In the Lord ſhall all the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified, and glory.* The rich Proviſions of the Covenant of Grace have laid up for the Juſtification and Remiſſion for the Seed of *Iſrael.*

(6.) Such to whom God is pleaſed to promiſe Bleſſedneſs, theirs is the Promiſe, and the Covenant of Grace: But the Children of thoſe that are in covenant, are promiſed Bleſſedneſs. Such that be under ſuch a Promiſe as this is, have right to be lookt upon to be in the Covenant of Grace. In the Covenant of Works, there are the terrible Curſings of a Juſt and Righteouſly angry God: But in the Covenant of Grace, there you may hear the Soul-comforting Voice, that pronounceth all Bleſſings, yea Bleſſedneſs it ſelf; and this Bleſſed Voice is ſounded out to the Little Ones of thoſe Parents that are in covenant, *Pſal.* 37. 25, 26. *I have been young and now am old: yet have I not ſeen the righteous forſaken, nor his ſeed begging bread. He is ever merciful, and lendeth: and his ſeed ſhall be bleſſed.* What Bleſſedneſs is there which is not in, and from that Covenant, *Pſal.* 3. 8. *Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: thy bleſſing is upon thy people.* Thus I have done with this *Demonſtration* of the *Doctrine*, by which I have endeavoured to ſhew that the Seed of thoſe that are in covenant muſt be ſo, becauſe the precious Promiſes do belong unto them.

8. *Demonſt.* To Evidence the Truth of this *Point*, thoſe from whom God demands Covenant-Duty, and doth challenge the ſame from them; to them the Promiſe, and the Covenant doth appertain: The ſame Covenant that ſaith, *You ſhall*

be my people, ſaith, *I will be your God.* Now the Covenant requires of the Children of Gods People, that they be Gods People too, therefore they be in covenant. Look as the Parents do covenant for their Children, in their Infancy, ſo 'tis their Duty (ſo ſoon as may be) to counſel, and to inſtruct them, as Covenant-children to know, to love, to fear, to ſerve and obey God. Theſe are Covenant-Obligations: Thoſe that the Lord is pleaſed to take into Fœderal-relation with himſelf, to be his People; it is that they may be found in the conſtant and perſevering diſcharge of Relative Duties: *Thou ſhalt be my people*, What only to partake of Priviledge? No; but alſo to perform Duty. *Abraham* was very ſenſible of this, and therefore did command and oblige all of his, what he could, to be converſant in all neceſſary and incumbent Covenant Duties. See what obſervation the Lord did make of him, and what a Commendation he faſtens upon him, *Gen.* 18. 19. *For I know him, that he will command his children and his houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord, to do juſtice and judgment.* All Parents in covenant ought to ſee to this; they are ingag'd in covenant with, and for their Children, and are under an indiſpenſable Obligation to ſee that their Children walk and act ſuitably to the Priviledges, and Duties of it. God expects a Revenue of Honour from covenant Children, therefore he doth command their Parents to bring them up in the Fear and Admonition of the Lord, *Eph.* 6. 4. *And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* Thus *Timothy* was educated and brought up from a little child. Children are to be dedicated unto God by the Seal of the Covenant, by which they be bound to fear God, to ſerve, to obey him, to keep his *Word*, and to walk in his *Way*; as

Abraham

Abraham did inſtruct and command his to do. Believers Children muſt be under Gods diſcipline, bound to Gods Worſhip, kept in Gods Way; they be the Lords People. Muſt this be, and no Covenant-priviledge belong unto them, and be what *Pagans* and *Heathens* only be? This is the *Covenant-Diſpenſation*, firſt *Priviledge*, and then *Duty*; therefore Children that are in covenant with the Lord are called Diſciples, *Acts* 15. 10. *Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the diſciples,*—— They are in a peculiar manner to be inſtructed, and taught as thoſe from whom God expects early Service.

9. *Demonſt.* The ſame Covenant is transferr'd unto the Times of the Goſpel, ſince the Actual Exhibition and Aſcenſion of the Meſſiah; the ſame for Eſſence, and Subſtance, though in the Adminſtration of it, it may vary in ſome circumſtances; the believing and the covenanted *Gentiles*, ſtand in the very ſame Condition by Faith, and in the very ſame Kingdom-ſtate for the Eſſentials of it, out of which the *Jews*, through unbelief, were broken and caſt off; for they were graffed, ἐν αὐτοῖς, in the place and room of thoſe broken Branches, as *Beza* hath it, *Rom.* 11. 17. And it hath its firſt riſe from that ſeaſonable and never-failing Promiſe, *Gen.* 3. 15. which will run through all the Ages of the World, whereſoever God hath his Elect, by the preaching of the Goſpel to call into, and to incloſe within the limits of the Covenant. It was the Saying of a great Man, that *Adam* and *Eve*, when they entred upon a new Covenant bottom, were ſeminally a Viſible Church; for by them, the World, as well as the Church, as to be built. Here when the Lord did reveal his Grace, and gracious Covenant, he took in the Seed alſo, in the very dawning and firſt day-ſpring of the Goſpel, God

takes in the Seed of the Woman, ſo afterwards to *Abraham*, and ſo all along until the Time of the calling of the *Gentiles*. Now in the Times of the Goſpel, thoſe that be called, be the Children of *Abraham*, they, and their Seed, have a happy admittance into the Covenant of *Abraham*, and are Heirs according to promiſe, and bleſſed with that ever-living Father. The *New Teſtament* doth abundantly teſtifie of this; in many Scriptures we have the *Old Teſtament* Phraſe and Way, *Mat.* 8. 11. *Many ſhall come from the eaſt and from the weſt, and ſhall ſit down with Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.* By the Faith of the *Centurion* Chriſt takes an occaſion to touch by way of prediction of the *calling* of the *Gentiles*, and the *rejection* of the *Jews*, and the bringing of the *Gentiles* into the Covenant made with thoſe *Fathers*, and *Patriarchs*. I do not know how to forbear the inſerting of an excellent Obſervation that a Judicious Man makes upon this Text, thus, *Quare non ſine admiratione hoc additum fuit domeſticos regni Dei, & hæredes fore, qui tunc extranei erant, neque id ſolum, ſed fœdus ſalutis mox publicandum eſſe, ut totus orbis in unum Eccleſiæ corpus coaleſceret, dum Gentiles qui ad fidem accedunt ejuſdem cum* Abram, Iſaac, *&* Jacob, *ſalutis participes fore dicit.* Luke 19. 9. *And Jeſus ſaid unto him, This day is ſalvation come to this houſe, foraſmuch as he alſo is the ſon of Abraham.* Here our Lord Jeſus did preach the Covenant, and upon the Faith of this good Man, *Abraham's* Covenant entred into his Houſe, himſelf, and whole Family were taken into covenant, *Exod.* 16. 31, 32, 33. This was the happy State of this Man, ſo ſoon as he did believe, God took him into covenant and his whole Houſe, and all of them in the ſame Hour of the Night, did partake of the Seal of the Covenant, after this Example we practice, *v.* 14, 15. This was the caſe of *Lydia*, upon her

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believing, ſhe, and all her Houſe were Baptized. 'Tis ſtrange if that in all theſe houſes, there might not be one Child, there might be children in ſeveral of them; however children be a part, and a choice part of houſholds. So that here is a Rule for us to walk by, that when the Maſter or head of the houſe doth imbrace the Faith, that was never Baptized before, both he, and his, are to receive the token of the Covenant, as upon their believing, they do enter into it with God. This is the right way to be obſerved, that Parents entertaining the Goſpel, that were never under the bond of the Covenant, neither partakers of the Seal of it, muſt be baptized; and their Children, that are Fœderally received with them by God, muſt be alſo with them, *Rom.* 4. 16. *Therefore 'tis of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promiſe or the Covenant might be ſure to all the ſeed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that alſo which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, Viz.* He is the Father of all that do believe, both *Jew* and *Gentile*, *Eph.* 2. 13, 14. *But now in Chriſt Jeſus, ye who ſometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Chriſt: For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition.* Now by the blood of Chriſt the parting Wall that was between the *Jew* and the *Gentile* is taken away, and both of them that believe are incloſed in one Covenant. The *Gentile* that was afar off being out of Covenant, and the *Jew* that was nigh being in Covenant. Now in the New Covenant all our Spiritual and Eternal bleſſings come ſwimming to us upon the blood of Chriſt, which blood for ever runs thro' the Covenant. We have no other way of remiſſion of Sin, of renovation and Regeneration, or of Eternal life, then *Abraham* had in the Old Teſtament, *John* 8. 56. Neither doth the Lord require

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any other obedience from us, then he did from *Abraham*, therefore we are to walk in the steps of our Father *Abraham*.

10. *Demonst.* God doth challenge the Children of his people, that be in Covenant with him, to be his Children. There is a special Interest and propriety, that God layes claim to have in the Seed of his, they be more his children, then their's; they are brought forth for him, and by the Seal of the Covenant are, and ought to be devoted and dedicated to God, *Ezek.* 16. 20, 21. *Moreover thou hast taken thy Sons, and thy Daughters, whom thou hast born unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured: That thou hast slain my children.* This is brought in, as a great aggravation of their sin, in their cruel and wicked Idolatry; because their Children were those that God had a propriety in, tho' they were their Parents children by generation; yet they were his by Adoption, and Federal assumption. To offer any Creature to an Idol, is a great sin, but to offer Children is far worse, and to offer Gods Children, that is worst of all. What greater Sacriledge can there be, than this, to rob God of his Covenant-Seed, brought forth unto him, and to cast them away upon Idols? May not they be said to rob God that endeavour to rend, and tear his Children out of the Covenant, and refuse by the Administration of the Seal to give them up unto God?

11. *Demonst.* Shall be taken from many gross, (I wish I might not say wicked) absurdities, that follow the denying Infants interest in the Covenant of grace with their Parents. That Doctrine cannot be of God, that is cloathed with, or attended upon with many absurdities. I do find that those that are great zealots in casting Children out of their hold, which the great Lord

Lord Proprietor hath given them in the Covenant, are not apprehenſive what abſurd things do attend them. The Livery of this Doctrine diſcovers it to be of no good Family; its retinue may render it very queſtionable, yea, very unſound. The truths of Chriſt admit of no abſurdities, of no groſs Inferences; you can infer nothing from any Doctrine of the Goſpel, but what is pure, and precious: Men to ſupport their Errors, may endeavour to extort, and wreſt the holy Scriptures, to ſpeak their filthy Language, and to give countenance to their odious *Tenents*. This is one of the Worſt abuſes and helliſh Rapes that can be offered to the word of God. Satan himſelf hath an exquiſite skill herein, and he hath taught many of his Diſciples a dextrous knack in this black Art. Did but the Adverſaries of this my Doctrine conſider into what abſurdities they chaſe their Game; and how the pretended beautiful face of their opinion is ſcratcht and torn, it would make them a little more modeſt and moderate in their aſſertions and concluſions. I ſhall touch upon ſome few of that multitude of abſurdities that do inevitably follow ſhutting Infants out of the Covenant of grace, they are included in with their Parents.

1. This doth impoſe a great reſtraint upon the bleſſed Covenant, contracting the large and copious grace of God, that is involv'd in it. This clips the wings of the love, grace and mercy of God, that doth dilate and amplifie themſelves in a Covenant way. Men may boaſt and vaunt that they are the great admirers, and promoters of the riches of Divine grace, but ſo long as they do Eclipſe, and obſcure the glory, and the brightneſs of it in the Covenant; ſo long they are but empty Pretenders, like unto ſounding Braſs, and a tinkling Cymbal. The great way that the fountain of Grace hath alwayes taken to diffuſe and to convey

vey it ſelf, ever ſince the miſerable ſtate of Man ſtood in need of it, hath been thro' the Covenant of grace; out of which to exclude Infants, is the ready way to contract, abbreviate and to confine it in ſtraighter Channels then ever God intended it for. What a wonderful reſtraint is here fixt upon the grace of God, when Parents muſt only be taken in, and all their Infants muſt be thruſt out; when Parents muſt be the Children of the Covenant and of the Promiſe, and their Seed muſt be the Children of the Pagans and Heathens, and in no better a capacity as to any Spiritual priviledges then they; when much of the Luſtration and admired beauty of it is (by every unprejudiced Eye) clearly to be ſeen from the gracious extent of it, to the Seed of thoſe that are taken into it. Thus with *Abraham*, and all along, and thus in our Text, *the Promiſe is to you, and your Seed.* Nay, this is to make an eſſential violation upon, and alteration of the Covenant, without any colour of pretence, or ſhadow of reaſon in the leaſt: For we never read ſince the inſtitution of it, that ever Children were ſhut out.

2. This makes the caſe and condition of Children far worſe than they were before the Incarnation and aſcenſion of Chriſt; and it makes the Covenant-State of believing Parents to be worſe: for before they were not only themſelves in the happy compaſs of the Covenant, but they had their Children with them alſo, [*to thee, and to thy ſeed.*] Here ran the Glory, the Grace, and the Promiſes of the Covenant, to incourage the convinced *Jews* to believe, and repent. The Apoſtle in my Text doth aſſure them, that the Promiſe is not only to them, but to their Children likewiſe. Methinks what a bloody Knife is here at the Throat of all the gracious Covenant-promiſes made to Infants, or poor Children. By this opinion they have ſmall ground

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of rejoycing at the appearance of Christ in the flesh, that did immediately abandon them out of the Covenant. We read *Mat.* 21. 15. of Children crying in the Temple, *and saying, Hosanna to the son of David*: But this Doctrine of shutting them out of the Covenant gives them but little ground of those acclamations. But their sounding out of the praises of the Redeemer, is a clear Indication that it was for their sake, that he was come to impart unto, and to inrich them with all the redemption-blessings wrapt up in the Covenant. Doubtless their amazing *Hosannah's* they poured out to their Mediatour of that Covenant they did partake of, were by a Supernatural instinct and influence, *Mat.* 21. 16. *Have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes, and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?* The Lord Jesus never came into the World to contract, but to inlarge the Covenant; he was so far from turning Children out of the Covenant, as that he hath extended it unto the *Gentiles*, and all the nations of the World, and their Seed, upon their believing.

3. This shuts out, and deprives them of the ordinary way of Salvation; as to extraordinary wayes, we have no Rule to walk by, what a prejudice is here offered to Infants? And what a Soul-destructive *Tenent* is that, which deprives little ones of all ordinary wayes and means of eternal Salvation? They have as precious Souls as any; and by nature (thro' the guilt and filth of sin) as miserable and obnoxious to Divine wrath as others. They have equal necessity of the grace of God, and the blood of Christ with their first Parents they descended from: And I know no ordinary appointed way for their help, relief and recovery, but by and thro' the Covenant of grace. How slenderly do many consider of this cruel absurdity, that they cannot free their opinion from? How helpless doth this render all children of pious

Parents

Parents to be ? I might illuſtrate and amplifie this by many particulars, ſome of which I ſhall juſt propound.

(1.) This doth deprive them of being Members of the viſible Church of Chriſt ; for this Church is incloſed within the Covenant ; to ſhut them out of this incloſure, is directly oppoſite to Chriſts own and open aſſertion, *Mat.* 19. 14. *Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of ſuch is the Kingdom of Heaven.* So that to exclude Believers Infants, being part of th viſible Church in general, is to exclude them from any ordinary State and way of Salvation ; this hath been a long received ſaying, that *extra Eccleſiam non eſt ſalus*, no Salvation in an ordinary way. To exclude all Infants of Believers from a notion of *Abrahams* Spiritual Seed, from a Covenant and Church State, is to put them into the ſame State of the Children of *Infidels* and *Pagan Gentiles*, who are ſtrangers from the Promiſe and Covenants, and in a godleſs, Chriſtleſs and hopeleſs State, *Eph.* 2. 11, 12. This the Apoſtle ſets out to be the deplorable condition of all ſuch, making no diſtinction of *potentia remota, aut propinqua*, let this be well conſidered.

(2.) They cannot be judged to be the Elect of God to Eternal life ; all that ſhall ſaved, are the choſen to Salvation before all time, *Eph.* 1. 4, 5. *According as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him in love : Having predeſtinated us to the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf.* 2 Theſſ. 2. 13. *But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord ; becauſe God hath from the beginning, choſen you to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the Spirit, and the belief of the truth.* The line of Election doth uſually, and for the moſt part runs thro' the Lines of the inchurched incovenanted Parents ; there the greateſt part of the golden Veins are plac'd. So it was amongſt the *Jews* in the duration of their

their Church and Covenant-State, *Rom.* 11. 5. *Even ſo then at this preſent time alſo, there is a remnant according to the election of grace.* Now for men to turn them out of the Covenant of Grace, is to render them in a very unpromiſing Station of the Election of God, to appertain unto them. This is as to Gods eternal choice to make them altogether as hopeleſs as the Seed of *Pagans* and *Infidels*. Tho' I readly grant that ſecret things belong unto God; yet from what is revealed, we have little ground to judge that any conſiderable quantity of the Elect are to be concluded to be amongſt the Heathen world; where the Covenant is not on foot, where Chriſt is neither preached or known, where Souls be not converted nor called, nor any ſaving ſignes by the fruits and effects of Election diſcovered nor Demonſtrated.

(3.) Such cannot be ſuppoſed (by any ordinary proſpect) to be any of them, that God hath eternally given to Chriſt to Save; thoſe that are ſaved in time, are ſuch that are given to Chriſt before all time: When Chriſt came into the World, to ſuffer, to lay down his precious life, he openly declared, that it was for his ſheep, for thoſe the Father had given him, and for none beſide, *John* 10. 11, 15, 17. and 17. 6, 9. There was an eternal Covenant of Redemption concluded between the Father and the Son; in the which the Son did ingage to ſatisfie Divine juſtice, by being a Propitiation in his blood, for the Redemption of thoſe that were given him: And the Father promiſed all grace here, and everlaſting glory hereafter unto them as the fruit of his own grace, and the purchaſe of their Mediatour that offered up himſelf as an offering, and Oblation of a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Tit.* 1. 2. And all this is conveyed and tranſmitted to them by, and thro' an Evangelical Covenant of grace made unto believing Parents and their Elect Seed: For this

this is the great Sluce, thro' which all the bleſſings of the Covenant of Redemption do run. Now to baniſh Infants out of this Covenant, what foundation can we deſcry to build any hopes upon, that they be any of thoſe, that be eternally given by the Father, to the Son to bring into a State of grace here, and manſions of glory hereafter, *Pſal.* 89. 28. *My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant ſhall ſtand faſt with him, Viz.* with Jeſus Chriſt.

(4.) We cannot look upon any of the Seed of Believers to be loved by God from the beginning, (if they be excluded that gracious compact they be in with their Parents,) Gods love to his Elect before all time is manifeſted to them in time; the eſtabliſhing of a Covenant of Grace, is the great effort and emanation of the love of God to the eternally, deſigned and determinated Subjects of the ſame God did ſingle out *Abraham*, and his Seed, from the reſt of the World, to make an open patefaction, and diſcovery of the hidden, and ſecret purpoſes, and intentions of his grace, and love to them; therefore he entered into a Covenant of Grace with them, not only with *Abraham*, but alſo with his Seed, that being the great conveyance of all unto them. Eternal grace, and love ſtreams thro' it from the fountain of grace and love: So that if they be thruſt out of this, they be diverted from the uſual current of all gracious deſigns and purpoſes; and this muſt of neceſſity render their condition to be very dangerous and deſperate.

(5.) Neither can they be hopefully lookt upon to be redeemed, and purchaſed by Chriſt and his meritorious blood: That which gives believing Parents any good aſſurance of hopes, that Chriſt extended his mediatory undertakings and ſufferings for their Children, is the Covenant-intereſt their Children have obtained with them. Take away

away this Anchor-hold, and the Anchor that is caſt out, will come home, and Hope will languiſh, and quickly grow very faint. But here in my *Doctrine* is a good bottom for Faith and Hope, in our wreſtling with God by Faith in Prayer, for the glorious Fruits and gracious Effects of the Effuſion of the Blood of the Lamb of God, that gave up himſelf unto death for us. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf came through the Covenant, and was the great Seed of the Promiſe; therefore he hath this Attribute given to him, That he is *the Mediatour of the Covenant*, *Heb.* 8. 6. All his Mediation is promoted and tranſacted through this gracious Covenant, therefore alſo he is called *Jeſus, the Mediatour of the new Covenant*, *Heb.* 12. 24. And alſo his Blood is called *the blood of the Everlaſting Covenant*; it cometh ſwimming unto us through the *Everlaſting Covenant*: So that to ſhut the Seed of the Faithful forth of this Covenant, you do (as much as you can) carry them beſides the uſual paſſage of this Covenant-Blood.

(6.) Neither can they be capable of Remiſſion and pardon of Sin. Infants as well all others be Sinners, guilty Sinners, and have an indiſpenſable neceſſity of the pardon of Sin, as well as the Adult; they be born with the guilt of *Adam*, Sin lying at their door, which is a ſtrong Bar to keep them out of Heaven, unleſs it be by pardoning Grace removed: They come into the World, and can never go to Heaven, though they be never ſo few Moments in it, without pardoning Mercy. But where is Forgiveneſs ſeal'd? Is it not in the Covenant of Grace? Are not the Free and Gracious Promiſes great Branches of, yea Eſſential Parts of the Covenant? And are not the Promiſes of Remiſſion, ſome of the Promiſes of it? Therefore we may ſee that all thoſe that are or ſhall be pardoned, it muſt be by and through this Covenant; and if ſo, where are the

Hopes

Hopes placed for the pardon of the Sins of our dying Infants, that are ſhut out of it? I need not (I hope) ſtand to prove by ſeveral Scriptures, that pardoning Mercy is Covenant Mercy, and is aſſured by the Promiſes of it; indeed there is not one Promiſe of this, but what is a Covenant-one. Oh! then let us have a care what we do, that we do not dare to diſinherit the Children of Believers, in that which gives the greateſt hope of their pardon of ſin.

(7.) They cannot be the Lords Adopted Children, without this Covenant of Grace: Adoption is a Covenant Bleſſing, take it in a general and in an eſpecial acceptation; there cannot be ſo much as a general Adoption without this Covenant, as I have ſhewn you, becauſe of this all *Iſrael* was called Gods Son and his Children; this I have proved by many Scriptures which do abound with it: much leſs can there be any ſpecial and peculiar Adoption without a Covenant of Grace, this being one of the prime bleſſings of it. Gracious Parents are greatly concern'd that their Children ſhould be the Lords, that they ſhould be the Adopted Children of the Heavenly Father, and Heirs according to promiſe: but this is the peculiar favour and priviledge of ſuch, that are concluded within the compaſs and bounds of the Covenant, *Act.* 3. 25. *Ye are the children of the Prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our Fathers*, &c. It is by Covenant that ye become Children, and do partake of the Adoption; for unto Covenant-ones doth the Adoption appertain, *Rom.* 9. 4. *Who are Iſraelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the Covenants.* Here we ſee that the Adoption, and the Covenant go together; he that is ſhut out of one, cannot be a Partaker of the other.

(8.) They cannot be ſanctified nor waſht from their Sins; turn them out of the Covenant, and

you

you drive them from the Laver of Regeneration and Sanctification; nay, you send them away from the very Fountain of Grace, that is open'd for Sin and for Uncleanness, *Zech.* 12. 10. Infants, yea those of the most pious and sanctified Parents, were *shapen in iniquity*, and *conceived in sin*, *Psal.* 51. 5. Those that spring from corrupt Parents cannot be clean, *Job* 14. 4. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.* and 15. 14. *What is man, that he should be clean? and he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?* It is impossible that he should; Parents by propagation can only convey Sin to their Posterity, not Grace; but all the hope that they can have of their Sanctification is lodg'd in a Covenant of Grace, where there are Provisions of cleansing and Sanctification treasur'd up; and unless Infants be sanctified, they cannot be saved, nor inherit the Kingdom of God, *Eph.* 5. 5. But the Covenant of Grace is eminently adorned with excellent Promises of cleansing and Purification. And for this our Lord Jesus poured out his Immaculate Blood, which is the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant; this he did for his Church, which Children are a numerous part of, *Eph.* 5. 25, 26, 27. And all the washing and cleansing of Souls is promised in, and tranſmitted through the Covenant; so that for Children to be excluded from it, they must be bereav'd and depriv'd of all this great Covenant blessing, without which they must be lost eternally, and be concluded with the abominable and filthy, to be the Fuel of inextinguishable Flames of Revenging Wrath. But Parents may encourage themselves, from the good Inducements that are administred to them, in reference to their little Children, from this Heart-supporting, and Soul-reviving Covenant, *Jer.* 31. 33. *Viz.* This is one great Branch and Blessing of my Covenant: *Ezek.* 36. 25. *Then will I sprinkle*

sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. Infants must be included in these Promises, *Deut.* 30. 6. *And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul.* This is a blessed Encouragement vouchsafed by the Covenant of Grace, but deny Infants a Title to this, and then you have no room left to expect (in an ordinary way) their Purification and Holiness. So that still it appears to be dangerous to exclude them this Covenant.

(9.) They cannot enjoy the Lords gracious Presence without partaking of the Covenant; it is his Covenant-Presence that is his peculiar and gracious Presence, that he doth enrich his People withal. The Church, and the Covenant-People of the Lord, did partake of this Presence, before Christ came it was with them, and with their Children, 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. *I will dwell with them, and walk with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people:* Viz. My peculiar, and my Covenant-People; for unto such doth this Special Presence appertain; God pitcheth his Tabernacle, and fixeth his Presence, and Residence, among his that are in this Happy Compact with him, *Lev.* 26. 11, 12. *And I will set my tabernacle amongst you: and I will walk among you, and ye shall be my people.* To turn Children out of this Covenant, is the next way to send them from all the Beatifical Shines of this Mercy, and to dismiss them from the gracious Presence of the Lord, and to make them wandring and perpetually expos'd Vagabonds, like unto *Cain*; yea, this is the way to bring the Children of Believers under that direful Imprecation, *Psal.* 109. 10. *Let his children be continually vagabonds,*— The worst Vagabonds in the World are those that be stigmatiz'd with the infamous Brand of being Excluded

cluded the Covenant, and the gracious Preſence of the Lord. We ſee then, that Men had need be careful how (in reſpect of the Covenant) they deal with poor Infants.

(10.) They cannot be gathered to Chriſt, nor brought under the Wings of his Mercy. It is an Excellent Promiſe of Chriſt, That the gathering of the People, *viz.* of all the Elect, ſhall be unto him, *Gen.* 49. 10. *The ſcepter ſhall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, viz.* Chriſt, *and unto him ſhall the gathering of the people be.* But ſtill the gathering of Chriſt is a Covenant-gathering, *Pſal.* 50. 5. *Gather my ſaints together, that have made a covenant with me by ſacrifice.* The Wings of Chriſt, underneath which the gathering muſt be, are lifted up in this Covenant; though his gracious Wings be never ſo receptive, and large, yet the only way to creep under them, is by getting within the Bond of the Covenant. Thoſe that be not within the Incloſure of it, are not ſaid to be gathered, but to be remote, and diſtant from Chriſt, *Eph.* 2. 12, 13. *That at that time ye were without Chriſt, being aliens from the common-wealth of Iſrael, and ſtrangers from the covenant of promiſe, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Chriſt Jeſus, ye that were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Chriſt.* You be called and brought into the Covenant, though you were afar off, yet now are brought nigh by the Blood of the Covenant; ſo that all that are not in the Covenant, are ſtill afar off, and remote from Chriſt. This is the condition that Children of pious Parents muſt be unavoidably caſt into, that are baniſhed the Covenant of grace, by which a people are brought nigh and gathered into and unto Chriſt.

(11.) They be by this way of dealing ſhut out of (in a word) all Covenant-Bleſſings, and Priviledges;

viledges; and so are represented to be in a most deplorable and miserable condition, this strips them naked of all the covenant-blessings, they be cloathed and invested with. It is the promise of the Lord, and it is a promise full of grace, *that he will shew mercy to thousands of them that love him, and keep his Commandments*, *Viz.* To many generations of their Seed, and posterity. I shall here inlarge no further. Thus, by what hath been said, you may see that by excluding Infants out of the Covenant of grace, they be shut out of all the ordinary ways and means of Salvation. For a full confirmation of all these particulars, we see our friends, the *Anabaptists* deny to the Infant-Seed of Believers, the token of the Covenant, which Seals up all the Covenant-mercys that God hath promised and graciously provided: For it is to be observed, that when the Lord did establish his Covenant with *Abraham*, and his Seed, *Gen.* 17. 7. in the 10. *ver.* He instituted and appointed Circumcision the Seal of the Covenant to assure *Abraham* of the performance of all the gracious promises of it is. To deny the Seal then, is to break the Covenant, and (as far as man can) to deprive the Seed of all priviledges, and benefits of it.

4. The next absurdity from the Doctrine of turning Infants out of Covenant is this, It doth not only hinder them, from being Members of Christ; but makes them the miserable off-spring and Members of Satan. Those that deny Childrens Covenantship, by which they be Fœderally holy, pretend some kindness unto them; in as much as they would not have them to be bastards, they would not have them to be the product and Children of harlots, and whoremongers; but they indeavuor to make them the Children of the Devil, they cannot be the Members of the Body of Christ, if not in Covenant; because all that are his he receives them by,

by, injoys them in, and communicates to them through a Covenant: Doth he pardon them? Doth he Adopt them? Doth he ſanctifie them? Doth he preſerve them? All is through a bleſſed Covenant, without which they muſt be plung'd into a miſerable condition; God is not their God and Father, Chriſt is not their Redeemer and Advocate, they be remote and far diſtant from God, they be in the Tents of the *Egyptians*, of the Synagogue of Satan and his Children, if they be not in the Covenant of Grace, they cannot be in the Kingdom of God, but muſt be in the Kingdom of Satan, the God of the World, and the Prince of Darkneſs, that rules in the Hearts of the Children of Diſobedience. Until the converted *Epheſians* were called out of Sin, they were without the Covenant, and without a Promiſe, yea, without God and Chriſt, and all hope in the World, both for themſelves and Children alſo.

5. This takes from, and defeats godly Parents of all ground of hope, concerning the Eternal Happineſs of their dying Babes, Children and Little Ones. A *Pagan*, an *Infidel* may by this *Doctrine* have as good a Foundation to build their Hopes of Happineſs upon, as to their deceaſed Little Ones, as the moſt holy Saints of God in the World: For what is that, which can give any one great hopes of another, but a viſible Covenant-State, where all Salvation is lodg'd and founded? To turn Infants out of the Covenant, and to make them Strangers thereby to all the ſalvificable Promiſes thereof, is the way to leave them no hope, nor their Parents for them. I wonder what hopes in an ordinary manner (and we muſt not build upon extraordinary things) they can have concerning their Departed Infants, who before they were diſmiſt out of the World, were by them diſmiſt out of the Covenant. For my

part, I do comfortably profess, that the hopes that I have of the Salvation of my dear Young Ones, that are out of the Body, is purely built upon the Grace of God in this Covenant, which I would not be without for Ten Thousand Worlds. Oh! Christians, Christians let not this Hold of Mercy go, as ever you would incourage your selves to hope, that your dear Expired Babes are in the Bosom of Christ.

6. And by consequence, according to this Doctrine of our *Adversaries*, we can have no hope of seeing our buried Infants again in comfort, when we dye, or at the Blessed Coming and the Glorious Appearance of the Lord Jesus in the last and ultimate Day. What hopes can we have that our deceased Infants are fallen asleep in the Arms of Christ, and that he will bring them again with him, and you shall enjoy them eternally? if they be not inclosed and intrencht in the Covenant of Grace, vain are the hopes of all in this matter without it. But whereas the Lord in covenant, hath in a most gracious manner proclaim'd himself thus, *I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and Jacob, and of their Seed for ever*; this is sufficient ground to comfort our selves that we shall have a blessed fresh View, and a glorious Enjoyment of our little absent Ones, and that for ever. There can be no ground of a happy Resurrection to Eternal Life for our selves, or Infants, but by and through a Covenant; without this, Parents can have no warrantable, nor comfortable expectation of seeing their Infants at the Right hand of Christ, in the Great Day, but on the Left, among them that were never in covenant, but lived and died afar off from Christ, and so without all hope. What can we expect to hear of our Little Ones, when Christ shall judge the World in Righteousness, if they be then found without the Pale of the Covenant, but a formidable,

dable, though a righteous, Doom pronounced against them, to inhabit the Flames of Eternal Burnings?

Thus I have insisted upon some of the gross Absurdities, that do fall in with their cruel and unwarrantable turning the Children of Believers out of the Blessed Covenant of *Abrahim*, the Father of us all. I wish that all that have heard me may seriously, and impartially, without all prejudice, ponder upon these things. I perswade my self, did but Christians thoughly consider these Matters, it would not be that many durst be so prompt, and bold, to distranchise Infants of this Covenant *Charter*, as they are. Many make nothing to make Breaches upon the Lords gracious Inclosure, that they may turn the Lambs forth into the Herds of the Goats and Wolves. Thus I have done with the *Second General Head*, propounded to be observed in the Method of this my Discourse, and so I proceed.

III. To the *Feird General Head*, the *Adm* of this Matter, which is to give some *Reasons* to shew, why it is so, why the Lord doth take Infants into covenant with their Parents. Many good *Reasons* might be given for this; But I have been large upon the immediate preceding *Head*, that was in this *Controversie* chiefly to be insisted upon; insomuch, that I design much brevity in this; but however, I judge it very suitable to give you a few *Reasons* of this good and precious *Point* of Gospel-Truth.

1. *Reason* Shall be taken from the Rich and abundant Grace of God; that is the inward moving Cause of all this Covenant, is all of pure Grace; and it is a great Birth from the Infinite Womb of Grace. Nare it an inconceivable Influence of the Riches of the Grace of God to

Sinners. Oh! what but unsearchable Grace did the Lord manifest in calling *Abraham* out of an idolatrous place and Nation, and to establish his Covenant with him, and his Seed for ever, and make him to be the Father of many Nations, Kindreds and Tongues? Away with that pitiful *Notion* of a Covenant of Works, and outward Blessings made with *Abraham* and his Seed, in *Gen.* 17. whereas the very Tenor of that Covenant representeth it to be a Sparkling Constellation of the Shining Refulgency of the Grace of God. The God of Grace takes whom he will, and impales in this Covenant; first he was pleas'd to take the *Jews* into it, and leave out all the World besides, to enter into covenant with them, and to be their God; then Grace took the *Gentiles* in among the *Jews*, and into the place from which some through unbelief were broken off, *Rom.* 11. 17. The casting away of some of the *Jews* was the reconciling of the World; God would shew his Goodness and his Severity to whom he pleased, and who can say unto him, What dost thou? ——— *he gives no account of his matters*, *Job* 33. 13. Grace hath accepted of the *Gentiles*, and of their Seed to be holy, under the Administration of the Gospel. Is Grace less abounding, giving out less Priviledges now, under the *New*, than under the *Old Testament*? Hath Grace contracted the Covenant more now than before? Hath Grace no Covenant-Blessings for the Children of Believers now? And must their poor Off-spring suffer a cutting off of the Entail of the Covenant? Hath *Jacob* carried away all the Blessing, and none left for the Children of the inchurched and incovenanted *Gentiles*? Surely Grace is not now straitned. Our dear Lord and Saviour hath the same Bowels of Mercy to poor tender Babes that ever he had, and as he had then, when he said, *Suffer them to come unto me*,

and forbid them not, and declared that *of such are the Kingdom of Heaven*, *Mat.* 19. 13, 14. He took them up into his Arms, and put them into his Bosom, as we may well suppose, when he laid his Hands upon them and blessed them: Hath not Grace the same effects as to Children, as when he sent his Apostle to tell the poor awaken'd and bleeding Sinners, that *the Promise was to them, and their children?* As when it graffed in the *Gentiles* among the *Jews*, to partake with them of the Juice and Fatness of the Olive-tree, it hath not spent all its Fatness upon them; but if there be any Fatness, Nourishment, Satisfaction, and Comfort, to have hope in God from the Covenant for poor Little Ones, we have it, and the Apostle comforts trembling Creatures in our Text with it, and so the Apostle *Paul* in telling the *Gentiles*, that they be inserted in this Covenant among the *Jews*, and are Partakers of the same Fatness with them. This therefore doth Answer them, that demand and question *How natural generation can entitle a Man to Covenant-Priviledges?* I demand, How doth natural generation entitle a Man to the Curse? A corrupt Man under the Curse of the First Covenant begets a Child in his own likeness as corrupt, and as accursed as himself; How comes this to pass, but through the Justice of God, in imputing to Children the Curse of that Covenant, under which they were born? So *é contra*, a Believer under the Covenant of Grace, begets a Child, though corrupt as from him, yet by vertue of the Grace of the New Covenant, under which he is born, he hath a Fœderal Holiness, and is a Partaker of the Priviledges of the same Covenant. So Grace in the appointed time, shall re-assume the *Jews* that be cast out, and graff them again into their Old Stock, and they shall be a Glorious People.

2. *Reason*, Shall be taken from the final Cause, there is a double final Cause of it.

1. That the Lord may have and reap the Glory of his Grace, of this high expression, and signification of his grace, *Viz.* in taking Infants into Covenant with their Parents; which they do rob him of, that deny this grace to Infants, they do greatly abbreviate, extenuate and vail the grace of God, that will only admit the Adult believing, and repenting Parent into Covenant; but by no means will their Seed and Little Ones: This is the way to congeal the divine bowels that be full of inward yearnings to inclosed Little Ones. That the Apostle in my Text might administer the best, and to the most expedient Cordial to the broken and afflicted *Jews*, who were greatly concerned not only about their own, but the safety and Salvation of their Children; tells them, *That the promise was to them, and their children:* The belief and exercise of faith about this matter, is the ready way to promote, an excellent Revenue of praise and honour for the grace of God: What wrong and indignity is offered to the grace of God, by shutting of poor Infants that cannot plead for themselves, for whom the grace of God and blood of the Covenant of the eternal Son will effectually plead, out of this Covenant? Let men talk what they will of the Spiritual Seed, of the grace of God in Christ, yet so long as they labour to abandon an innumerable multitude of the Subjects of it, they are great Prevaricators from, and perverters of that grace; and so become grand obstructers of that Crop and harvest of praise and honour, that he expects from his Covenant-transactions of grace with Parents and their Children.

2. That so by this means he might allure and graciously intice men and women to accept of, and to come under this Covenant: This is indeed a sweet decoy, that a gracious God is pleased to make

make us of in this affair; this is to insinuate the minds of men into a well liking of, and acceptation of the Covenant, and the Gospel administration of it: This is the scope of the Apostle in my Text. Here the Apostle was alluring his pensive and weeping Auditory to accept of this; therefore he milks out of this breast of Consolation that which might taste sweet upon the Palates of them, whose Sins were now bitter as Wormwood and Gall, and were under Soul-sinking fears about their own and their Childrens eternal welfare and condition. Well said the Apostle, I discern your trembling and aking hearts, your overwhelming doubts and fears; but be still, sedate, and compose your minds and thoughts, accept of the Gospel dispensation, and for your comprehensive encouragement and compleat satisfaction, I say unto you, *The promise is to you, and your children.* Oh! methinks, how did this revive their disconsolate and dejected hearts, and drooping sinking spirits, quickly melting their wills into a ready complyance with the Apostles Exhortation, as we find presently after our Text. If this priviledge were cut off, the *Jews* would have little incouragement to leave *Moses* to follow Christ; to forsake the Old, and to cleave to the New Dispensation of the Covenant which was then setting on foot, and which they were exhorted unto. They well knew before, that they themselves, and also their Children, were in Covenant with God; and the Apostle speaks unto them as so instructed and established; therefore said he, *The promise is to you, and your children.* As if he had said, I know that this is an Article of your Faith, that which all the *Jews* do very tenaciously adhere unto, and this shall be continued unto you. This the Apostle doth firmly assure them of, to win them over; telling them that they should be no losers by coming under

this Dispensation; seeing the priviledge of having the Promise to them, and their Children, should not be taken from, but confirmed unto them. This removed all impediments out of their way, and so they did readily and unanimously fall in with the Apostles Exhortation.

3. *Reason.* Because the Lord would discover his peculiar love to, and care of the Children of his own People. This is a peculiar priviledge, and it is to demonstrate peculiar love and affection: It is also (as I shall shew you presently) that the Lord may discover his peculiar love to the believing Parents. Here is the distinguishing love and kindness of God to them both. God hath such a love for pious Parents and their Children, that he hath not for the rest of the World; therefore he takes them both into Covenant with himself. Covenant Love is alwayes exprest in the Scriptures to be peculiar Love, that God might shew even to the face of all the World; that distinct and special Love, which out of infinite and special Grace and Favour he had lodg'd in his heart to *Abraham* and his Seed; he was pleased to take them both into Covenant with himself; and so they came under a blessed Marriage Bond, which doth not only denote a near Relation, but also Conjugal Affection. God hath a peculiar Love for them, will make them his Church and People, therefore brings them under a Covenant Bond, and Compact, and Engagement; *Deut.* 4. 37. *And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them.* This hath been the way of the Lord, to express his peculiar love that he hath to and care over a People to enter into Covenant with them, which is of a distinguishing and of a discriminating nature from the rest of the World and their Seed; *Ezek.* 16. 8. *I entered into covenant with thee,*

thee, and thou becameſt mine. Mine and Covenant do alwayes go together.

4. *Reaſon.* Becauſe the Lord may lay a good and ſure foundation for the hope, comfort and joy of pious Parents concerning their Children. God knows how much the hearts of good men are concerned about their little ones the Lord is pleaſed to beſtow upon them; how much and how deeply they be taken up in their conſiderate and ſtudious minds about their Eternal State. Religious Parents know what immortal and never dying Souls their Children are inſpired withal, that muſt be everlaſtingly happy or miſerable; that muſt live with Saints and Angels, or Devils for ever; they know not how ſoon it may pleaſe the Lord to demand them back again from them, and conſign them to an unalterable ſtation; they know that they have conveyed and communicated to them a ſinful Nature, and as they are deſcended from them, they be plunged in the filthy labyrinth of Sin, and that they be born under the guilt of Sin, by Nature Children of Wrath: Theſe, and ſuch like matters cannot but oftentimes ſink and overwhelm the thoughts of good Parents, and occaſion penſive meditations about their little ones: Now for them to ſit down and contemplate what grounds of hope God hath been pleaſed to give them, in relation to the Souls of their Children; oh how comfortable is it? And they find that all their hopes muſt center in this bleſſed Covenant, which the Lord hath been graciouſly pleaſed to make with Parents and their Children. A Covenant abundantly inriched with all Temporal, Spiritual and Eternal Bleſſings and Priviledges, which may give full ſolace, and acquieſcing content and ſatisfaction to godly Parents that are thus concerned about their Children. There is enough in that promiſe

of the Covenant, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed.* By reason of the Covenant of Grace, Believers may look upon their Children to be the gracious gifts of God unto them: So did *Jacob*, *Gen.* 33. 5. said he unto *Esau*, *These are the children which God hath graciously given thy servant*; and by reason of this Covenant they may hope and believe, that God will graciously take care of and provide for them. If Parents did believe that their Children were not in Covenant with the Lord, and that the promises and privileges did no more appertain unto them, than unto the Children of Pagans and Infidels, as some do too impiously assert; I know not what joy and comfort they can conceive in their minds about their Children, nor what can feed their Faith in crying unto and wrestling with God for them: What comfort can poor grieved Parents take concerning that miserable state they receive their Children into the World in? unless they find sweet and comfortable support and relief from the everlastingly gracious Covenant; which doth wonderfully magnifie the Grace of God to Parents, in that he hath taken their Children with them into it, and makes abundantly for their peace and consolation. This was that which satisfied, and even ravished the heart of *David* with joy, concerning his Family and Children; *2 Sam.* 12. 23. when his Child was dead, he was greatly comforted and satisfied, saying, *I shall go to him, but he shall not come to me*; which words, as I apprehend, denote the good hopes that quieted his mind, through the thoughts he had of the eternal happiness of his Child, and that he should shortly go to him, and enjoy the same happiness with him. This good man *David* did meet with great disappointment in his House and Family; but from the consideration of the Covenant, he had a never-failing spring of joy

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and comfort, which did exhilarate his Spirits in their depressing sinkings; 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. *Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.* This is a full breast of consolation, upon which all godly Parents may hang, and suck, and draw a fullness of peace and comfort for themselves and Family in their most discouraging and dying dispensations.

5. *Reason.* Because by this means the Lord may provide for a perpetual and an uninterrupted succession for his Church and Kingdom in the World. That God will have a Church unto the end of the World is founded upon his Eternal Purpose, the Mediatory Transactions of his ever blessed Son, and upon the infallible Promises of the never-failing Word: But this is the way and expedient, that he is pleased to pitch and fix upon, for the preservation and perpetual propagation of it; he hath taken his Church into Covenant with himself, the Parents and their Children, the latter of which are to promote and to provide for its continual succession; that so when Parents have finisht the work of their generation, and shall descend the stage of the World, their Children may take place, and fill up the vacancy in the Church of God. This was one great reason why the Lord did take *Adam*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* into Covenant with their Children, that out of their Loins might issue a Seed to populate, and to recruite the Church as to a perpetual succession in Gods Family, House and Kingdom. So the Covenant in the new Dispensation of it takes in the Parents and their Seed, for the same end and purpose. For the great bulk of the Elect, and body for the future provision

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of the Church, are provided from the Covenant Seed: Therefore as it hath before been proved that Children are Members of the Kingdom and Church of God, this is one great end why the Lord hath instituted Marriage for Covenant Parents, that he might provide a constant Seed for his Church. The Metaphors by which the Church is illustrated, described and lively represented do abundantly demonstrate this; sometimes the Church is compared to a Vineyard, sometimes to an Orchard, and sometimes to a Garden; see *Cant.* 4. 13. *Psal.* 80. 15. *Isa.* 5. 1, 7. *Matth* 21. 33. *Cant.* 4. 12, 16. and 5. 1. and 6. 2, 11. now we know that those that have the care of Orchards, Vineyards and Gardens, one principal thing that they have in their eye and endeavour, is a succession, either of Trees, Plants, Herbs or Flowers, therefore they have their Nurseries and their Seeds. Oh! so it is here, the great God that takes care of his Orchard, Vineyard or Garden, hath a curious regard of, and respect to a constant succession; and the Infants and Children of his inclosed and impal'd Covenant ones, are his Nursery and his Seed to secure a perpetual supply for all vacancies, that frequently by Death are incident to his Church and Kingdom: though the Lord doth not so confine himself, but that he doth sometimes take a wild Plant, and set in his Garden, such a one as he may find in the Wilderness or Forest of the World; but we speak of his usual way of provision in this matter; and because of this, Parents in Covenant with the Lord, must be careful in their educating and admonishing of their Children, which are the Lords Nursery, that they may be a visible and hopeful provision for a succession in the Church of God. For this very end they ought to have a singular respect unto, and a careful and diligent complyance with that holy command, *Eph.* 6. 4. *And*

ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: Thus they must endeavour to do that; and when they shall have finisht their work and course in the World, that then their Children may stand up in their room and place, as the immediate successors to them in the Church, in the work and service of the Lord in their Generation. So much for the Third General Head propounded in my Discourse, and for the Doctrinal part of it; now we approach unto the Use of this Point, which is the last thing I promised and propounded in this matter.

IV. The Fourth General Thing to conclude this Point, is to make some useful improvement of it by way of Application. I did not, neither do I intend to be large in this particular, only I thought it was pity that such a Truth should be wholly overlook'd without some, though but little Application.

1. *Use*, By way of Information. This Doctrine doth inform us of many precious Truths; it is a Field out of which we may gather most rare and excellent Flowers; it is a full Fountain, from whence doth issue variety of Streams: Some of those things that may be deduced and inferred from it, I shall set before you.

1. This doth inform us of the exceeding Riches of the Grace of God, both as to Believers and their Seed. The Grace of God hath alwayes been exprest in a Covenant way; here is Grace abounding and running over to Parents, those that God hath taken into Covenant with himself; here it is intended to all sorts and degrees of the Children of Men; here is help to the poor helpless Infant, even to him that sucketh upon the breast, and a ground of hope administered to tender and

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concerned Parents to their dying Little Ones. In this Covenant is lodged a bleſſed plethory of Grace, a full proviſion made for the ſmalleſt as well as for the greateſt, not only for electing, but for calling, juſtifying and ſanctifying Mercies; here is that which is ſufficient to ſupply the leaſt twig with liquor, to fill all ſorts of veſſels: There was a fullneſs of Oyl poured out in a Covenant way upon the head of our great High Prieſt, that ran down and extended it ſelf to the uttermoſt skirts of the garments, *Pſal.* 133. 2. It was of wonderful Grace, that God was pleaſed to ſingle out *Abraham*, to eſtabliſh his Covenant with; and that it might appear in its cleareſt beauty, and be moſt tranſparent, it did comprehend his Seed for ever. So in our Text, when the Apoſtle would give his awakened and almoſt ſuccumbing Hearers the moſt ſuitable and ſupporting relief, he opens the boſom of Grace in the Covenant extent of it, telling them, *The promiſe is to them and their children.*

2. This doth inſtruct us into the high honour that the Lord is pleaſed to confer upon his People. It was not only an Act of Grace, but alſo of Honour, that God was pleaſed to admit *Abraham* unto, when he took him and his Seed into this Covenant with him; This is that which made the Nation of the *Jews* ſo honourable, as it was above all the Nations of the World beſides, they and theirs were the Lords incloſure and Covenant People, and ſo were diſcriminated and diſtinguiſhed from all the reſt of the World; I may allude to that place, *Pſal.* 149. 9. *This honour have all the ſaints; praiſe ye the Lord.* Oh! Chriſtians, you that do injoy this high preferment, though you have never ſo ſmall a proportion of the matters of the World, yet God hath gratified you with greater honour than if your Families had appertained to Crowned Heads, and Scepter-

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Hands ; *Ezek.* 16. 8. *And I entered into covenant with thee, saith the Lord God* : Then did the Lord deck her with all manner of rich and noble Ornaments ; and *ver.* 14. it is said, *Thy renown went forth among the heathens, for thy beauty was perfect, through my comelineſs which I put upon thee.*

3. This doth inform us of the great miſtake of thoſe that deny the Children of Believers, as ſuch, to have any intereſt in the Covenant of Grace. This is the Doctrine of our Friends the *Anabaptiſts* ; but we have (I hope) ſufficiently proved, that God is ſo gracious as to take them into Covenant with their Parents : They be not left out, till they be ſo adult as to make profeſſion of their Faith, Repentance and Obedience, and until then to be looked upon as the miſerable off-ſpring of Heathens, Infidels and Pagans. They that oppoſe this Truth, ſhut out the Natural and talk of a Spiritual Seed, and ſo out of a pretence to magnifie the Grace of God, they do greatly eclipſe and reſtrain it. I might have inſiſted upon the many evils, and the dangers of this, but I muſt not inlarge or diſtinctly ſtand upon particulars ; I might have told you, and proved ;

(1.) That our Adverſaries herein make another Covenant than what the Lord hath made, a Covenant of Grace, excluding all the Children of thoſe that are taken into it. It would be eaſie to ſhew that from the Lords making of a Covenant at firſt, and ſo all along, both in the Old and New Teſtament, he never made one leaving out of the Children.

(2.) That by this means there is very great and apparent wrong done unto the Infant Children, which are the Seed and Embryo of the Church of God. It's ſad for thoſe that take upon them the power and exerciſe of the Keyes, to exclude and ſhut them all out together. Into what a miſerable ſtate and condition muſt they be caſt into?

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Our great Champion and *Challenger* hath laboured extreamly in this matter; but how poorly and weakly is easie to be apprehended by any competently endowed with Covenant-Knowledge.

(3.) That by this means the ordinary way and dispensation of conveying and communicating the Fruits of Christs Death to Children, even to all the Infant part of his Church, is cut off. How can they partake of the Blood of Christ for their renewing, cleansing, sanctification, justification and remission of Sins? These be some of the great and singular Blessings of the Covenant of Grace, through which the Blood of Christ, which is the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant, doth in an ordinary way run.

(4.) By this means Men do undermine and labour to destroy the validity and efficacy of all that God hath been pleased graciously to determine, and hath done in a Covenant for Babes; Indeed the foundation of God stands sure, and God knows who are his: Though Men may labour to cut off the Seed of Gods People from the Covenant, yet the Lord is more merciful to them than men are. I make no question but the infinite Grace of God doth (through a Covenant) save many of those poor Children that their cruel Parents do indeavour to shut out.

(5.) This cuts off the hopes that Parents from this Covenant may and ought to have concerning their dying Children, this being the ground for their anchor hope to be cast out into; and this cuts off their hopes as to the Sanctification and Regeneration of those that are living.

(6.) This is the way to render the Prayers of Parents, and of the Church of God for Little Ones, to be altogether insignificant and vain; this doth pass a Sentence of condemnation upon them all. There ought always to be poured out a Flood of Prayers for the Seed of the Church. It

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is a very dangerous thing to condemn the Prayers of pious Parents, and of the whole Church, daily pour'd out upon this account, for thoſe Children of the Covenant that have paſs'd under the Seal of it, and by the ſame have been devoted and dedicated in a ſolemn manner unto God. Let ſome think as contemptuouſly of it as they pleaſe, and reproach it with never ſo much *ſcurrility* and contempt; I would humbly adviſe ſuch, to conſider what is ſaid, *Rev.* 13. 6. *And he opened his mouth in blaſphemy againſt God, to blaſpheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven*; *viz.* them that dwell in the Church. Infants they dwell in the Church, they be a Multitude of the bleſſed Inhabitants of it.

(7.) By this means how do Men undermine all the Churches of Chriſt, that adhere to this Doctrine of Infants, and for their Baptiſm. Many of the *Anabaptiſts* do Found their Churches in renouncing Infant-Baptiſm; accounting it no better than Antichriſtian, and impoſing another Baptiſm, which they make to be an eſſential part of the Foundation that their Church Structure is built upon, and the only Door to admit into the ſame; nay, many of them do ſay, that ours are no True Churches of Chriſt, and all becauſe we differ with them as to the Subject of Baptiſm, and that we are but as Heaps or Herds of uncircumciſed *Philiſtines*.

(8.) By this means there is a great Stumbling-block laid in the way of the *Jews*, in coming over unto the Meſſiah, and accepting of the New and Goſpel-Adminiſtration of the Covenant: They (*viz.* the *Jews*) are for the *Old Teſtament* in the latitude, and full extent of it; therefore they are for the Seal of the Covenant to be fixt ſtill unto the Infant; which accordingly in their way, they do ſtrictly obſerve and practice to this very day; but to Aſſert another Covenant, which

which excludes all their Infant-Seed, this will never go down with them, neither would it with these here in the Text, had the Apostle mentioned to them a Covenant without their Children. This would have been but faint and cold Encouragement to them, to have accepted of the Apostles Exhortation, Thoughts of the Exclusion of their Children would have made them to hang back.

(9.) This makes the Case of the *Jews* worse, since the owning of the Messiah, than it was before; and this in the Days of the Gospel, greatly contracts and narrows the Grace of God, as to Believers.

(10.) This bereaves the Church of God of a Multitude of its Members; for Children are the declared Members of the Visible Church, by Christ himself, as I have shewn. Oh! what a cruelty is here offered to, and an Invasion made upon the Church of God? If Infants be not in this Covenant, they cannot be in the Church; this is to make such a Church that God never planted, one that is only constituted, and made up with Adult Members. I am apt to believe, that the greatest number of the Church is comprehended in the Infant-Seed of it: The Body of Christ is but small respectively, but this is the way to make it small indeed. Many more things might have been here added; but I have said something before in this Affair, and shall therefore at present say no more.

4. This Doctrine doth inform us, how cruel they may be lookt upon to be, that exclude themselves and Children out of this great Priviledge; I mean all wicked and ungodly Parents; for by their sin and wickedness they deprive themselves and Children of the Blessings of the Covenant, the only ordinary way of their Welfare and Happiness. Wicked and ungodly Parents do not only

labour

labour to ruine themselves, but also their Children, by cutting off themselves and Little Ones (so far as they can) by their Sins, from all the Grace and Mercy of the Covenant. It may well be said of such, They are not *Parentes, sed Peremptores*, they have not the Love, the Bowels, and Care of Parents, that they may be Instruments of their Childrens Salvation, which they are bound by all Bonds and Obligations unto; but they labour to destroy themselves and theirs for ever. Ungodly Parents are more savage and cruel to their Little Ones than the most unnatural and cruel Brutes, or Beasts in the World: All that they do in their wicked ways and practices, hath not only a tendency to their own, but also to their Childrens eternal misery and destruction; such declare, that they themselves are not in covenant with God, and they endeavour by this means to exclude their Children for ever.

5. This informs us of the great Sin of those that were the Seed of the Godly, and are become Adult, but do not walk in the Steps of their Parents, nor observe the Covenant-Obligations, that they be under to serve, to fear, to honour, and to walk with God, that do not observe their dedication to the Lord, and to be the Lords by their baptismal Vow. What Parents did ingage to endeavour that they should do, they have no regard of, or respect unto; but violate the Sacred Bonds of the Covenant by a wilful perpetrating of, and a voluntary giving up of themselves unto all Sin and Impieties; all that they do is effectually to accomplish their Exclusion by the just Procedure of God against them, even their utter Exclusion out of the Covenant. How sad will it be with such, when God shall reckon with them, and avenge the Quarrel of his Covenant! This is a Sin that a Jealous God doth resent with great complaint, and with high displeasure,

pleasure, *Psal.* 78. 37. *For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant:* Ezek. 44. 7. Isa. 24. 5. *The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof: because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.* Jer. 31. 32. *Not according to the covenant I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which covenant they brake, though I was a husband unto them.* How unkindly did God take this of them, in breaking such a Covenant, in which the Lord stood in the gracious relation unto them of a *husband*, which should have obliged them to Honour, Chastity, and Obedience for ever.

6. This doth inform us of one great ground that we have, and proceed upon for the baptizing of the Infants of believing Parents, that be in covenant with God; because their Children are in covenant with them. This is very evident in our Text, *Acts* 2. 39. Those the Apostle had here to deal withal, he doth exhort them to repent, and be baptized, and so to enter into the then Establishing Administration of the Covenant, they and their Children also, for the Promise was to both. Children that are taken into covenant with their believing Parents, ought to partake of this Seal of the Covenant with them, for the Covenant is to the Children, as well as unto them. If Children be *Fœderati*, then they ought to be *Signati*, there is a necessary connection between the Covenant and the Seal; when the Lord was pleased to take *Abraham* and his Seed into covenant with himself, the Seal of the Covenant was (upon strict command) to be Administred unto the Infant-Seed, *Gen.* 17. 10. The neglect of which was very displeasing to God. To talk of being in covenant, and to deny the Seal to such that are, is very absurd; for this is to cross and contradict

tradict the Expreſs Command and Inſtitution of God. Therefore our Friends the *Anabaptiſts*, being very apprehenſive of this, endeavour to evade the Stroke of this Blow by their miſerable *Shifts*, and fruitleſs *Attempts*, to prove that that Covenant in *Gen.* 17. made with *Abraham*, was a Covenant of Works; herein they have laboured in the Fire, altogether in vain, for the Tenor and Circumſtances of that Covenant do loudly proclaim it to be a Covenant of Grace, and the natural Language of it, if it be ſincerely hearken'd unto, will be Grace, Grace. *Abraham*'s Natural Seed were in covenant with God, therefore had the Seal of the Covenant, which was Circumciſion injoin'd them, as a Singular Priviledge: So in proportion thereunto in Goſpel-days, the Seed of Believers in covenant with God, ought to have, and to injoy the Seal of it, which is Baptiſm. 'Tis brought in as a great Objection againſt Infant-Baptiſm, That there is no Command for it; but if Men will but lay aſide all prejudice, and make uſe of the Reaſon that God hath furniſh'd them withal, they may here ſee a clear Command for it, (though it be by conſequence,) Was it not the manifeſt Will of God, that they to whom the Covenant belonged ſhould partake of the Seal of the Covenant? Therefore the Seal is called the Covenant, *Gen.* 17. 10. as if to have the Seal was to have the Covenant, or to be in it, there is ſuch an inſeparable communion and connexion between them; nay, we may carry it home here, we may eaſily ſee a clear Command for it; for it was the obvious and the undoubted Command of God that thoſe in covenant ſhould have the Seal of the Covenant, tho' the Seal be altered, as to the Inſtrument, yet not as to the Subſtance, and the Command for the affixing of it remains inviolable: As in the Sabbath, though the Day of it be changed, yet the

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Command for it remains untouched, not in the leaſt abrogated. If we renounce the baptizing of Infants upon a preſumption, that it can only be prov'd by conſequential Commands, then we ſhall involve our ſelves into an inextricable plunge, and intanglement of other great Truths of the Goſpel, which can chiefly be proved this way; that the Adminiſtration of the Lords Supper muſt continue to the End of the World, muſt be drawn conſequentially from ſuch places as *Mat.* 28. 19, 20. 1 *Cor.* 11. 26. So when it is ſaid, *As often as ye do this*, our Divines do infer a Command that it ought often to be done, and not once, or twice, or thrice a Year, as the manner of ſome is. What Rule can we have of dealing with Women, and cenſuring them, in caſe they offend, but by the way of conſequence, for the Rule is expreſly, *If a Brother doth offend thee*, &c. Nor is a Brother of the common Gender, *Mat.* 18. 15. 2 *Theſſ.* 3. 6. Here I might make mention of ſome great Things in matters of Faith, That Great Doctrine of the Reſurrection of the Dead, that was ſomething ſparingly, and darkly expreſſed in the *Old Teſtament*, our Lord and Saviour proves by undeniable conſequence to the Learned Sadducees, that were vehement Deniers of it, *Mat.* 22. 31, 32. *But as touching the reſurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was ſpoken to you by God, ſaying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.* Mark, this is founded by way of conſequence upon that place, *Exod.* 3. 6. Thus the *Fathers* proved againſt the *Arrians* that denied Chriſt to be Eſſentially one with the Father, they held him out to be ὁμοούσιον, *conſubſtantial*, or *co-eſſential* with the Father; This is a great Point of Divinity, and a great Article of our Faith, yet there is no direct Scripture to prove it. This

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is the way that is taken in Reasoning with those that deny and dispute against the Deity of the Holy Ghost; How can it be proved, but by infallible consequence of the Scripture, that there are Three distinct Persons in One *Divine Essence*, or *Godhead*, or that there is in our Blessed Mediatour but one Person, and yet Two distinct Natures Essentially distinguished? Thus, also we may read in Matters of Fact, where the same Rule doth hold, and must be strictly observed, as for instance, where it is said, *Acts* 4. 4. *Howbeit, many of them which heard the word, believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.* What were there no Women among them, none of their Wives? The *word* here is not the common Gender that might comprehend the Woman, for it is τῶν ἀνδρῶν not τῶν ἀνθρώπων. It is strange if here should be no Woman, that did at this time believe, and were baptized. I perswade my self the *Anabaptists* will yeild that here might be some Women; Ay, but that must be drawn by consequence. Certainly we must not doubt, but that in the Churches of *Ephesus*, *Philippi*, *Colosse*, and all the Churches of *Asia* had Baptism among them, yet this must be concluded by consequences, or no way as I understand. According to the Analogy of Faith, Evangelical Duties are not alwayes grounded upon Expreſs Commands, either in *Old* or *New Testament*, but from consequences drawn from either; as the Duties of praying Morning and Evening, in the Family, and also in the Closet alone, daily reading of the Scriptures, and prefix'd time of Meditation, setting apart a Time or Day to seek God by Prayer, in a more than ordinary manner. Many more things might have been mentioned and improved in this Affair; How can any Man that is so prove himself to be a Minister of Christ? Or any serious and pious Christian, that he hath

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an Interest in Christ, that he hath Saving and Special Grace, and is an Heir of Heaven, but by consequence? How many Arguments do the *Anabaptists* found upon consequences to prove their Believers Baptism? When they make for them, then they can cleave to them, and make the utmost Improvement, but when they make against them, then they be of no use or validity, but they cry out, *Give us plain and positive Proofs, and an absolute Command for such Infant-sprinkling*, (as reproachfully they phrase it,) which my *Antagonist* is wonderfully subject to. One great Reason why many well-minded Christians run away with their Notion of rejecting Infants Baptism is their not wisely considering, and pondering upon what I have (though in much weakness) said of the Covenant, and of the new Administration of it in the Times of the Gospel: An Excellent *Specimen* we have of it in our Text, where the Gospel that never was before, in its recent Administration is preached and believed by those that never were before baptized, there the Adult do enter into covenant, with their Children, and both ought to be baptized, and afterwards this is confirmed by whole Families that were so. Alas! it followeth not that because we read that those that were never under the Gospel Administration were never baptized before, but many were *Heathens* and *Gentiles*, and were upon their Faith and Repentance admitted into covenant, and received the Seal of it, that therefore their Children that enter into the same Covenant must be excluded the same Token or Seal of the Covenant, but the quite contrary is true, for still the Promise runs *to you and your Children.*

7. This Doctrine doth inform us that Children are capable of sundry Blessings of Baptism, and that because they are with their Parents graciously taken

taken into Covenant; moſt certainly the God of Grace would never have conferred this priviledge in vain; this Seal is not for blanks, God hath great Grace and Mercy to beſtow upon them, therefore he is pleaſed to impale them in this incloſure, that he may be gracious unto them. I need not ſtand upon this, for I have largely diſcovered to you what ſingular Bleſſings of the Covenant they be capable of, and what exceeding great and precious Promiſes are made unto them; of which if they are not capable then God hath promiſed in vain, and deluded the faith and hopes of good Parents that are built upon them: But who dare be ſo bold as thus to accuſe God? I have ſhewn you, how that to Infants God hath made Promiſes of the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt, of Remiſſion of Sin, of Renovation and Regeneration, of being taught of God, of having the Law of God wrote in their Hearts; though they be not capable of Mans teaching, yet what cannot the Lord do for them? He can as eaſily by his Spirit frame and faſhion the New Creature in them, as he could curiouſly form and faſhion them in their Mothers Womb; and ſo it muſt be, otherwiſe dying Infants can never be ſaved. We have a late confident Writer Mr. *H. C.* who hath tranſmitted ſuch things into the World, that plainly declare that Infants are not capable of the Bleſſings of this Ordinance, and ſo by conſequence not of the Kingdom of Heaven. I will give a few of his bold Sayings, very fatal to poor Infants: He ſaith, *This Ordinance* (ſpeaking of Baptiſm) *cannot concern Infants, but Believers, becauſe it is a teſtification of the Remiſſion of Sins, and Salvation to the worthy Receiver, and Subject of it.* What doth he mean by his *teſtification* but a Sign and Seal of it? then it muſt inevitably follow, that Children are not capable of Habitual Faith, nor of the Pardon of Sin; for here Believers and

Remiſſion of Sin are ſet in oppoſition to Infants (if what he ſaith ſhould be true) as not capable of either. Again he ſaith, *That Baptiſm is a lively repreſentation of Regeneration, therefore can only affect Believers*, (meaning adult Believers, that he is pleading for, to be the only ſubject of Baptiſm) : *The Apoſtle* (ſaid he) *alludes to Baptiſm, when he ſpeaks of the waſhing of Regeneration, Tit.* 3. 5. his meaning is, that the Ordinance is a lively body, ſymbol and ſign of Regeneration : It is very true, 'tis ſo ; but mark how this is brought in, and upon what account it is ; *viz.* to prove that Believers (that is adult ones) that profeſs their Faith, Baptiſm can only affect them, it is ſuch a ſign, body and ſymbol of Regeneration, and the New Birth only : So that here Infants are ſhut out of Regeneration and the New Birth ; they muſt not be Baptized, becauſe they are not capable of them, which is the unavoidable conſequence of this deſperate Doctrine. Again he tells us, that in *Luke* 18. where we read of Infants that were brought to Chriſt, which he took up into his Arms and bleſſed ; that the *Greek* word ſignifieth, *a Child capable of teaching*. Surely if he, notwithſtanding his flouriſh of Learning, had been able to have examined the *Greek* word, he would not have been ſo confident as to have ſpoke thus : It is great pride for Men to pretend to have ſuch Learning they never had any Education, nor Opportunity to attain unto. I have ſhewed before the proper and true meaning of the *Greek* word in that place, and that from good Authority, unto which I refer you, and the ſame that we have in *Timothy* : Let this Man talk of his Learning among thoſe that are not acquainted with his Education, and from what his immediate acceſs was to the Pulpit. Again he ſaith, *If it be their Duty who believe to be Baptized, then I infer, that thoſe that are not capa-*

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ble of this Grace of Faith are under no Divine Obligation, nor their Parents neither, to Baptize them, it is only a piece of Will-Worship which God never required. He speaks of the Grace of Faith in general, and denies that any Infants are capable of it, no not so much as Habitual Faith; if so, then I understand no hopes given to their Parents of their Union with Christ, Justification, Remission and Salvation. Again he saith, *That Infants Baptized are not taught of God, nor made Disciples of Christ.* This is directly against the express Word of God, *Isa.* 54. 13. *And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord:* Is not this giving God the lye? so in saying, *They be not the Disciples of Christ*, is also directly opposite to the Word of God; *Acts* 15. 10. *Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples*; which Disciples are evidently Children: Here still you may see what fatal Doctrine this bold *Asserter* delivereth about poor Infants; can they be saved without their being taught of God? Though they be not capable of the teaching of Men, yet they are of Gods, and must be taught of him, otherwise I understand not how there can be any possibility of their Salvation. Thus I have given you a few hints of many, that might be brought out of this Authors Works. I think such sanguine sayings as these are, about Infants in Covenant with God, do loudly call for trembling from me, and Repentance from him.

8. This Doctrine doth inform us, that a great part of the Scripture was written for the good and sake of Children; God did greatly design and intend them in the choicest part of his Word. The Covenant of Grace doth comprehend the most precious and gracious part of the Word of God; though our late *Author*, and my *Confuter* tells us, *That they were writ for the Adult, and not for the Infants:* His Reason (I suppose) is,

because of their present ignorance. This is some of this excellent Divines New Doctrine. We may as well say, that their Mothers Womb and Breasts, that the Heavens and the Earth, and all the Elements; that Meat, Drink and Rayment, do not belong unto them; that Eating, Drinking and Sleeping, do not belong unto them: But we may ascend a great deal higher; if the Scripture was not wrote for their sakes, what will become of these poor Creatures for ever? Can God, can Christ, can any special Grace be theirs? What are the Scriptures relating to the Covenant, the Blood of it, and the gracious Promises of Remission, Union with Christ, Adoption and Sanctification, not appertaining to them? Were not the Scriptures wrote for their sake? when there are so many Directions and Commands abounding concerning their Parents Duty to them in all things, and all for the good of them, and to demonstrate the great concernedness of a gracious God for them, and the value he hath of them. Surely if we do but consider, what is wrote of Children in the Word, we may easily see that God did greatly intend them, in writing of it. I will name a few places; *Psal.* 78. 6. *That the generation to come might know him, even the children which shall be born.* Psal. 127. 3. *Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward.* Prov. 20. 7. *The just man walketh in his integrity, his children are blessed after him.* Deut. 4. 37. *And because he loved their fathers, he chose their seed after them.* *Isa.* 61. 9. *Psal.* 18. 50. A multitude of Scriptures might be brought to shew, how that in many Predictions and Promises, and other wayes, the Scripture was eminently wrote for the sake of Infants and Children, and the Seed of Gods People. What doth not those precious Scriptures of Christ, *taking little children up in his arms, and blessing of them,* appertain

tain unto Children? Is it not left upon Divine Record for their ſake? But that which is beyond all may make us all to be amazed, which is this; If the Scriptures were not wrote for the ſake of Infants, what ſhall we ſay of all thoſe Bleſſed Scriptures that were wrote about the Holy Child Jeſus, of his Conception, Birth and Infancy? If it be as this bold *Aſſerter* would have it, then all Scriptures relating to the ſame, muſt not be the ſubject matter of our Faith and Hope, but all of them ſhould be expunged out of the Word of God, or ſtand upon its record as idle inſignificant Stories. It is clear, that if the Scriptures were not wrote for the ſake of Infants, then our Lord Jeſus Chriſt muſt come in for a ſhare in this Doctrine, which well may be called the Doctrine of Devils. This Man is greatly skilled in propounding ſuch Doctrine, that hath a direct tendency to exclude poor Children and Infants out of the Kingdom of God; not only out of the Kingdom of Grace here, but alſo the Kingdom of Glory hereafter. If the Scripture be not wrote for their ſake, I know not the Duties that are incumbent upon Parents concerning them, neither any hopes of any good here and hereafter can be conceived about them: But one would think the very naming of this, ſhould be more than ſufficient to baffle it, and its Author, from the ſtage of his Preſumption and Confidence.

2. *Uſe*, of the Doctrine; and all that furthermore I ſhall make of it, ſhall be of ſolemn and ſerious Exhortation, and that to thoſe Pious and Godly Parents, who are inriched and honoured with this tranſcendent priviledge of being in Covenant with God, they and their Children alſo: As your Mercy is great, ſo thoſe Duties that do reſult from hence are very great. God hath beſtowed much upon you, and he doth expect much

from you: Where much is given, from thence much is expected: The Lord hath done more for you than he hath for others, therefore he doth expect more from you than he doth from others. A few of these many Duties that this Covenant, and your Interest in it, do call for from you, I would set before you, and exhort you to a diligent observation and practise of.

1. Make a great account of the priviledge of this Covenant State; esteem it very high, tho' some, and that too many reproach and trample upon it; yet let it be a matter of wonderful valuation with you. God hath revealed much unto you, if he hath but revealed unto you a right understanding of his Covenant; *Psal.* 25. 14. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant*; or he will make them to know, to understand the Covenant in its Nature and Latitude, this is a secret that God reveals. All those that enjoy this Blessing, had need to esteem it very highly. What a blessed entail is here upon your Children? Those look upon themselves to be very happy, that be the Heirs of great Estates in the World, though they have not a present possession; yet there is a sure and certain entail upon them and theirs: But what is this to the entail of the Covenant? and unto the being Heirs to the Promise? How glad would some be, should they be assured, that such a great Lordship was continued to them and their Children? Ay, but here is the incomparable and for ever to be esteemed dignity, *viz. The promise is to you and your children.* Some good Parents when they shall come to dye, are like to have but little of the World to leave their Children; but this is their great Comfort, they being in Covenant, that they can cast them upon the Promise. How much better is it to leave them possest with the Covenant, than with the greatest Kingdoms

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in the World? I marvel with what Peace and Comfort they can leave their Children, when they come to dye, that ſhut them out of the Covenant: Next to a Mans own intereſt in the Covenant, muſt be the intereſt of his Children in it. I know not what a good Man ſhould prize more than the Covenant for himſelf and Family. How ſhould this be valuable to a pious Parent? When he cannot ſay, I can leave my Children in the enjoyment, or an aſſurance of any great matters of the World; yet I can comfortably part with them, leaving them in the Arms, and in the Conjugal Embracement of this Covenant. I would have your eſtimation of this comfortably to remain and continue with you, notwithſtanding the contempt, reproach and dirt that is caſt upon it. Our *Adverſary* is behind but very few in pouring Odiums upon it. I ſhall at preſent mention a very few of his opprobrious ſayings, not being willing as yet, to expoſe him very much, until he doth neceſſarily oblige me unto it: Take a few of his invidious and foul Speeches. He ſaith, *That thoſe that Baptize Infants, Baptize Heathens.* Here he calls all the Infants of Believers, Heathens; he cannot keep off from his Infant-damning Doctrine. I wonder in a common ordinary way of Salvation, what aſſurance he can give us of the Salvation of Heathens? I know not that there is Salvation in any but in Chriſt, nor that there is any Name given us under Heaven, by which Men, Women or Children can be ſaved, but the Name of Jeſus. The Covenant was, and ſtill is a diſtinction between the Children of Believers and Heathens: Let ſuch a one turn his own Children out of Covenant, and Heathenize and Paganize them if he pleaſe: through Mercy we know better things. It is worth while to conſider his great Reaſon that he gives to prove, *that the Children that are Baptized be Heathens*;

because *all are the Children of Wrath before born again.* If this be a Reason, then it ſtands in as full ſtrength againſt *Baptizing Believers*, as he calls it, becauſe the very beſt of them were Children of Wrath by Nature; ſo the Apoſtle ſaith to the *Epheſians* to whom he wrote. Thus I might argue with the ſame parity of Reaſon, They that Baptize adult Believers, Baptize Heathens, for they were Children of Wrath by Nature; and how can he know that all of them be born again? I am ſure many of thoſe that he Baptizeth, both in their Knowledge and Converſation, give but ſmall proof of their being born again: But yet every one may ſee, here is a vile ſuggeſtion, that Infants cannot be born again. This doth agree with what he ſaith furthermore, *Believers Baptiſm conſirms unto them Juſtification, Remiſſion and Salvation; but Infants have none of them confirmed to them in their Baptiſm; and that the Baptiſm of Infants cannot be a ſign of Regeneration to them.* Did ever Man ſpeak with more Confidence, and leſſer Senſe in this World? Is the Seal of the Covenant of no uſe or benefit to the Covenant Seed? It is little matter what raſh Men ſay: God hath made it the Seal of the Righteouſneſs of Faith, and ſealeth up all Covenant Bleſſings by it. Ay, but he ſaith, *Infant-Baptiſm never was ſealed by God.* This is a ſad doom upon Infants, and upon all that are for their Baptiſm. By the Sealing of Baptiſm, I ſuppoſe he muſt mean, the partaking of the Covenant Bleſſings that be ſealed up by Baptiſm: Theſe Bleſſings are either conveyed when Baptiſm is adminiſter'd, or after; as *John* did *baptize unto repentance*, *Matth.* 3. 11. But who hath made this Author a Judge, to paſs ſuch a furious Sentence? The beſt of it is, we have but his *ſay ſo*, without the ſmalleſt attempt of Proof; o I doubt not but the experience of many thouſands of Infants in Heaven, and others, and

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many now upon the Earth, will teſtifie againſt ſuch an abominable Aſſertion. He addeth further, *That Infants weep when they are Baptized, as if they did diſſent.* What a Childiſh Expreſſion is this? What think you? had they not as much cauſe of weeping when they were Circumciſed? which put them to the greateſt ſenſe and pain, and gave the greateſt occaſion of weeping. Oh that ever ſuch ſtuff ſhould ſhew its face in the World: Pray conſider, is there not as great a ſign of diſſent in many that he doth Baptize, as a little weeping in ſome Infants? Do they not go into the Water trembling and quaking, and overwhelm'd with fears, when they are plung'd over Head and Ears? So that though he ſpeaks of their joy, a great number of them are otherwiſe poſſeſt with diſmal frights, and want the beſt Cordial that he can adminiſter unto them again. Again he ſaith, *That Infants-Baptiſm hath not one Promiſe.* Confidently ſaid ſtill, without any Proof, I doubt not but my Text is a ſufficient confutation of this; where 'tis ſaid, *The promiſe is to you, and your children*; and many more places that have been mentioned. Now we ſhall come to a ſwinging piece of his Divinity. *I think*, ſaith he, *Tranſubſtantiation, Habitual Faith, and the Infant-Seed of Believers in Covenant, are terms equally allowable, and probably equally underſtood among their various Profeſſors.* Now this is to ſpeak through, and to diſgorge his Stomach at once. Pray conſider what things or Doctrines he ranks together to be equal with him; by this he gives us to underſtand, that the odious Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation* is as grateful to his Palate as *Habitual Faith* in Infants, and their being in Covenant with their Parents. Papiſts breaden God, which (by groſs Idolatry) they adore, is of the ſame eſtimation with him as the two others: Oh! let not my Soul enter into his ſecrets; what

Malice and Envy doth this import? and if Infants are not capable of Habitual Faith, which is one blessed branch of the New Creature; and if they are not in Covenant, I know not how they can be saved. If it be so, I must confess, that I can discry no ground of hope of the Salvation of my dear deceased Children; but blessed be God, I am better acquainted with the Covenant, and precious Graces of the Spirit, than that such froth and spittle should in the least degree affect my Hopes. I never read or heard of any Man that professed any Sobriety in Principles and Moderation (to those that in lesser matters were not of his size and measure) to speak after this desperate rate; thus to rank us with Papists, and that in one of their most detestable Principles, which have caused the effusion of Rivers of the Blood of Martyrs, and to render our Children, as we cannot but judge, uncapable of being saved, dying in their Infancy. There is something follows close unto this, which is a new invented way of Saving of Infants, though they be not in the Covenant, nor have any Habitual Faith; and that is, *to have their Sins done away by an imputed Righteousness*: This would be something, had he given us any Proof of his New Invention, but not a word of this: Indeed I think he must have a New Gospel to prove this. I did say, when I Preach'd these Sermons in my Congregations, *That to talk of a Righteousness of Imputation without a Covenant Interest and inherent Sanctification, was Mountebank Divinity*: And so I say still, not doubting, but in a short time, I shall not only say, as he hath, but prove what I say, as he hath not: I am sure the Scripture is abundantly on my side. I pass it by at present, because I intend if the Lord please, suddenly to demonstrate this matter: I am a weary of this pitiful trash, therefore shall say no more, till I

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shall Epitomize his Books, provided I have a further Challenge and Provocation: Only I shall give you one branch of his Charity to us, that sometimes pretendedly he calls Brethren, the Wounds he gives us, and the Darts he would strike into our Hearts, and the Hearts of our Children, discover him to be more like an inveterate Enemy, than a kind Brother; for his Pen and Pulpit, as to us, are filled with little less than Wormwood and Gall; yea, I may add (from what I have here discovered) even with Poyson: But pray take one touch of his Charity to his Brethren, as he calls them: He saith, without the least Proof, *That not only the Conformists, but also the Nonconformists, have lost the Door, and the Subject that should enter the Door:* So that we have lost the very Essence of the Ordinance, *viz.* of Baptism; we have neither right Form nor right Subject; and who are they that enter not in by the Door, but climb up, and come in some other way? We know the Scripture you refer to, and apply unto us, *John* 10. 7, 8, 9. 'Tis easie here to see your judgment of us, that we are the Thieves and Robbers that come not in at the right Door. I shall say but little to this now, for 'tis but the proud and empty sound of a Man that seemeth little to consider what he saith; only I do humbly, in the Name of the great Shepherd, Challenge my bold *Challenger*, to answer this Censure he hath put upon all his faithful Servants, that are for Baptizing of Infants at the great Day: Here he doth discernably enough Unchurch us, Unministers us, and Inordinance us; the Lord lay not this Sin to his door. We have little reason to wonder, that he should give us such foul play, when he ventures at the same time to deal no more kindly with the Church of *England*, that is guarded by the strong Walls and Fences of the Laws of the Nation; for he saith, *That the Conformists*

formists also have lost the Door, and the Subject that should enter the Door, and the very Essence of the Ordinance, and they their Ministers enter not in at the Door. Here is a Man that will not only tread over the low Hedge, but will venture upon the shurps of the Pikes to vent his Unchristian and Censorious Opinion. Christians, I hope such pitiful, raw, spurious and jejune Allegations as these I have presented you withal, will rather turn your Stomachs against them, than open your Throats to swallow them. Alas, I have given you but a little to what I might have presented you withal; let hot such empty Assertions, without the least shadow of probation, lessen your esteem of this Blessed Doctrine I have been upon. Truth is never the less precious because it is calumniated by opprobrious and dirty Pens. Look upon this choice Truth by the Light of the Word of God, and you cannot but see such a lustrious beauty in it, as to cause an inconceivable estimation and value in you for it.

2. Word of Exhortation I would press upon you is, that you would improve this Doctrine in the best ways, and unto the best advantages that you can. You and your Children being in covenant ought to be made the best use of, that may be. There be several ways by which you ought to improve this Doctrine; I shall propound some of them unto you, begging you to put them into practice.

1. By giving up your Children to God, in the use of the Seal of the Covenant, (I mean Baptism.) When God did make this Covenant with *Abraham*, and his Seed, he did so, and so it was all along when there was opportunity for it; the Covenant is the same still for the Substance of it, and the Seal ought to be affixt to the Subjects; Let Men never so much vilifie and reproach it, calling it *Baby-baptism*, and *Sprinkling of Infants*, without

without the leaſt ſoundneſs of Mind or Judgment. That is a pretty Saying for Children to laugh at, which our *Neighbour* in one of his *Books* brings in thus, *That it may be very much queſtioned, whether the Jaylor we read of,* Acts 16. *(that was baptized and all his Houſe) had any Children, ſeeing it hath been obſerved, ſome Years agoe, that for very many Years together, not one Child was born to all the Jayl-keepers in all the County of* Eſſex. This is a pretty Obſervation; it ſeems it was ſome Years agoe, I believe he knows not when, however he is not minded to acquaint us of the Authour of this Excellent *Story*. Let Men talk their fill, pray do you mind your Duty God requires, that your Children that be his by covenant, ſhould be given up to him by the Seal of the Covenant. Chriſtians have many Inducements lying upon them, thus in this Ordinance to devote their Children unto God: (1.) By this they do manifeſtly own, and ſet forth their Belief of the Doctrine of the Covenant. It is Practice that is the beſt Indication of the Belief of Divine Truth; we muſt not only be Knowers and Profeſſors of the Will of God, but muſt be Doers alſo; that Man diſcovers but a ſlender Manifeſtation of his Knowledge of the Covenant, whoſe Actions are not ſomething comporting with the ſame. 'Tis obſerved by ſome, that the reaſon why God met with *Moſes*, and threatned to kill him, when he was ſending him for the deliverance of his Brethren into *Egypt*, was becauſe he had not circumciſed his Son, *Exod.* 4. 24, 25. (2.) By this means we do openly ſhew forth the Grace and Goodneſs of God unto us, in making ſuch a Covenant, and the wonderful Love and Kindneſs of Chriſt in dying for us, which Blood is the Blood of the *Everlaſting Covenant*; as in the other Seal of the Covenant, the Lords Supper, Chriſtians do ſhew forth the Death of Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 11. 26.

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καταγγέλλετε, Ye do openly declare, preach, and publish it; so by the affixing the Seal to your Children you do set out and declare the Infinite Grace, Love, and Goodness of God in taking you, and your Seed into the Covenant. (3.) By this you do enter your Children visibly into the Church of God, or visibly declare and set them out to be such: Christ hath declared them to be of the Kingdom of Heaven, that is of his Church, and Parents ought by this Ordinance to represent and openly to declare them to be such. This is a visible incorporating of them into this body, and a listing them under the Banner of Christ, to serve and to cleave unto him. They must be put into Christ's List, and brought under his Banner, though they do him at present but little service. Thus we find in the Scripture, when God hath called his People solemnly to enter into covenant with him, to love him, to serve him, to obey him, they have appeared before the Lord with their Little Ones with them, *Deut.* 29. 10, 11, 12, 13. Children that are brought under the Bonds of the Covenant, and Listed for the Lord, it is their Duty when they attain to understanding to be very sensible of the same, and to do and manage themselves accordingly; for God will require their dedication and Parental obligation at their Hands. (4.) By this way Parents do shew their right understanding of, and do give a good testimony unto the covenant which the Lord has been pleas'd to gratifie them withal. Thus did *Abraham* by his immediate complying with the Lord in the Seal of it; by this they do openly declare their well liking of, and their great pleasure they take in the covenant, and how joyful and ready they are, that their Children should obtain, and be made the happy partakers of the Blessings and Priviledges of it, and be the open and visible Proprietors with them in it; methinks Parents should commend,

mend, and ſet out the excellency of this covenant, and what ſweetneſs and comfort they have had in it, by being very willing and deſirous, that their children ſhould be within the compaſs of it, and as they have done, partake of the rich and eminent Bleſſings of it. Pious Parents do not know how to live in any condition without the covenant, and the ſuitable and ſeaſonable Promiſes of it; and how can they chuſe then, but be very ſolicitous and deſirous that their children ſhould ſucceed them in ſuch an Enjoyment and Tenour? (5.) By this they do teſtifie their belief of the Truth, and of the Faithfulneſs of God, and the Veracity of all the gracious Promiſes comprehended and lodg'd in the Covenant: Indeed the Seal and Token is to aſſure and to confirm all; therefore when the Lord was pleaſed to eſtabliſh his Covenant with *Abraham*, and his Seed, there was Circumciſion as the Seal affixt, to be a great Incouragement unto the Faith of *Abraham* to believe, and expect the Accompliſhment of all the Covenant-Promiſes that God had made with him and his Seed for ever. Now when Parents that be in covenant, do ſuddenly by this Seal devote and give up their Children to God, they do ſignifie and declare their firm and unboubted Faith in all that God hath promiſed to them and their Children; and in this Matter they put up their Requeſts to God, exerciſing Faith in the Promiſes for their Children, and ſo alſo after in their frequent Requeſts for Covenant-Mercies for them. (6.) By this means Parents do as they ought to do, lay great Obligations upon themſelves, unto the greateſt care and diligence that may be, that their Children may partake of the Internal Part and ſaving Bleſſings of the Covenant. What a ſtrict Tye and Bond muſt this be to Parents to be greatly concerned for the Souls and Eternal Salvation of them? They have given them up unto God,

God, as his Children, in a Covenant-Obligation, and have ingag'd for them, now they muſt look to their Charge and Truſt, that the Souls of their Little Ones do not periſh through their default, by their careleſneſs and negligence in their diſcharge of their weighty and incumbent Duty, that the Living God in this gracious Covenant hath impoſed upon, and injoined them. *Abraham* had a great reſpect unto this, which cauſed the Lord to give him this commendation, *Gen.* 18. 19. *For I know him that he will command his children, and his houſhold after him; and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord, to do juſtice and judgment.* It was but in the *Chapter* before this, that he did enter into covenant with the Lord for himſelf and his: Oh! ſaid God, I know that he hath a ſence of his Covenant-Obligation upon him, that he hath lately received from me, and he will obſerve it, being careful of his Houſhold that they may perform the Duties, and injoy the Bleſſings of the Covenant. What a cloſe and ſtrict Engagement is this to Parents, that they bring up their Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord? How doth this call upon us to prayer, to educate carefully, and to inſtruct our Children in the knowledge and fear of the Lord?

3. Improve this great Bleſſing of the Covenant for the Encouragement of your Hopes as to the Spiritual Birth of your Children. This is the great Concern of pious Parents about their Children, ſo ſoon as they ſee that they be once born, that they may be born again, that they may not only be born of the Fleſh, but alſo of the Spirit, that they may not only have a Natural but alſo a Spiritual Birth: It is for this that godly Parents do groan and travail. You that are thus concerned for your Children, 'tis the Covenant of Grace that muſt be your great Encouragement in beſieging the Throne of Grace for them, your Pangs

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for the New Birth in your Children muſt be covenant Ones, it is the Covenant, and the Mediatour, and Blood of it, that muſt animate, quicken, and ſupport your Hopes in this great Affair; you muſt put the Promiſe in ſuit, and plead them with that God of Infinite Grace, Love, and Faithfulneſs, that hath put you and yours into this Federal Compact. You may humbly go to God, and tell him that he hath promiſed to be your God, and the God of your Seed, to teach you, and your Children, and to circumciſe your Heart, and the Heart of your Children, to love, and to fear him, that he hath promiſed to pour out his Spirit upon your Off-ſpring, and that your Children ſhall be taught of God, *Gen.* 17. 7. *Deut.* 30. 6. *Ezek.* 36. 26, 27. *Iſa.* 44. 3. and 59. 21. and 54. 13. And many ſuch Golden Promiſes of rich Grace comprehended in the Covenant, as Food for the Faith of Parents that make conſcience daily to purſue and wreſtle with God, for the renewing and ſanctifying of their Children. Wherefore go to God, and plead his Covenant after this manner, Haſt thou not promiſed to be a God to me and mine? Is not the Promiſe to me, and my Children? Thou haſt ſhewn abundance of Mercy in giving them all Natural Parts of the Body, and Endowments of Mind; Ay, but, Bleſſed Lord, thou haſt confer'd greater Mercy than this upon them, Thou haſt put them in thy Covenant, and haſt planted them in thy Houſe and Family, they have a Standing in thy Church: Lord be pleaſed to bedew them with all thoſe Heavenly Bleſſings thou haſt promiſed thoſe whom thou haſt placed and planted in ſuch a capacity ſo near unto thee: Theſe Natural Endowments be great Mercies, but haſt thou not promiſed a New Heart, a New Spirit, alſo to write thy Law, and to put thy fear into their Hearts? Oh! be a God to me and mine in the communication

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of all Covenant precious Blessings, in the greatest Latitude of them. When God had said, he will be a God, why may not we hope for the accomplishment of the fullest Sense thereof? Say to God, *Hast thou not made with me an Everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and this is all my salvation, and all my desire,* 2 Sam. 23. 5. We ought to understand, believe, and plead the Covenant in the greatest Latitude of it for our selves and ours.

4. Improve the Covenant to Duty and Obedience; let the Promises of the Covenant strictly, and for ever bind us to Obedience; where there is the greatest Grace dispenced, there is the greatest Inducement and Obligation to Duty and Obedience. The Covenant that saith, *God will be our God,* requires us, and ours, to be his *People*; there is a Covenant-engagement upon us, and ours, to be the Lords. But alas! how little is this thought upon? Most covet to have their Children to be baptized, and glory in their Baptism, but seldom make this to be any part of their care and endeavour, that their Children be the Lords. How little care have many Parents about the holy Education of their Children? How they bring them up in the Fear, Nurture, and Admonition of the Lord? How few command their Children, and Houshold to walk in the ways of the Lord? What Falsehood and Breach of Covenant is here? That *Charge* may be drawn up, and Exhibited against such careless and treacherous Parents, *Psal.* 78. 36, 37. *Nevertheless, they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto them with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant.* How many Parents do flatter God, and his Ministers? Promising great Things at the baptizing of their Children, but soon forget all, never taking any care according to their Covenant, of the Souls of

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their Children, that they may partake of the Bleſſings of the Covenant; they are very earneſt for the Outward Seal, but little concerned for the Inward Grace. What will Baptiſm avail for you, and your Children, if you are contented only with the outward Badge and Mark of the Diſciples and Followers of Chriſt? *Rom.* 2. 28, 29. *For he is not a Jew, that is one outwardly; neither is that circumciſion, which is outward in the fleſh: But he is a Jew, that is one inwardly; and circumciſion is that of the heart, in the ſpirit, and not in the letter, whoſe praiſe is not of men but of God.* Outward Priviledges and Ordinances will never prove you to be good Chriſtians; you and yours muſt have the Inward Circumciſion of the Heart, Regeneration, the New Birth, and Sanctification, ſhort of which nothing will avail to Salvation, *Gal.* 5. 6. *For in Chriſt Jeſus, neither circumciſion availeth any thing, nor uncircumciſion, but a new creature,* 2 Cor. 5. 17. *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature.* We are ſaid to be baptized into Chriſt, and to put on Chriſt; we muſt ſee that we have an Union with Chriſt, and are renewed by the Spirit of Chriſt, if ever we hope or deſire to be inriched with the Saving Benefits of Baptiſm.

3. *Exhortation* is to thoſe that are the happy Poſſeſſors of the Incomparable Mercy of the Covenant, admire and magnifie the Grace of God herein, that he ſhould not be content to ingage his Grace to, and for you, but to yours with you. You and yours were all Rebels and Traitors to God, and he hath received both into Favour and Grace with himſelf; God might have taken you into covenant, and have left out your Children, and that would have been an high Expreſſion of his Grace and Favour unto you, but this is conferr'd upon you and your Seed too, this gives you the fulleſt occaſion and obligation to magnifie

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him above the Heavens, and to cauſe his Praiſe to be continually in your Hearts and Mouths. How ſhould this alwayes affect and raviſh your Hearts? To conſider many of you, that the Lord ſhould be pleaſed to paſs by you, when you were polluted in your Blood, and ſhould ſay unto you, *Live*; that when you were in your Blood and Filth, (through your pollution and contamination) fit for nothing, but to be abhorr'd by God, that that ſhould be a Time of Love to you; that he ſhould then ſpread a Skirt of Grace and Favour over you, and cover your Nakedneſs, and ſwear unto you, and enter into Covenant with you, and not only you, but alſo yours, ſhould be taken into the Bonds of the ſame, and become his, *Ezek.* 16. 6, 8, 9, 10, *&c.* What Grace is this, that we ſhould be taken (poor *Gentiles*) and cut off the Wild Olive-tree, and graffed into the Good Olive-tree, which is contrary to Nature? That ſome of the natural branches ſhould be broken off, and we ſhould be taken and grafted in in their place, and partake of the root and fatneſs of the Olive-Tree? What matter of perpetual Thankſgiving to God is here adminiſtred to us? *Rom.* 11. 17. *&c.* Remember oftentimes what you were by Nature, into what a miſerable plunge of all infelicity you were caſt? how remote and diſtant from God, many of you before Converſion were without the Covenant, having no Promiſe? This might be the condition of ſundry of you, born out of the Covenant, and every way in a deſperate condition as to the concerns of your Souls, and Eternal Life. I cannot preſent you with a fuller and a clearer deſcription of your former ſtate, before the Lord brought you under the means of Grace, and effectually called you, then you have in *Eph.* 2. 11, 12, 13. *Wherefore remember, that being in time*

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past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision, by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands: That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus, ye who some times were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. The poor *Gentiles*, of whom we were part, were afar off, because not within the pale of the Covenant. This was the opposition that was between the *Jew* and the *Gentile*; the former was nigh, being in Covenant; but the other afar off, not being taken into that inclosure, *ver.* 17. Oh! magnifie God that thou that wert afar off, art brought nigh by the Blood of Christ: The Blessing of *Abraham* is come to the *Gentiles*, and come unto thee, and thy Family, through Christ, *Gal.* 3. 14. What cause hast thou to wonder that art yet within the bonds of the Covenant? and thy Little Ones, the Children that the Lord hath graciously given thee to be with thee? That thou and thine are become the Children of the Covenant and of the Promise, magnifie God for so inestimable an injoyment, and improve it to the utmost advantage of thy self and thine, but be not ignorantly gull'd and trapan'd out of it, as many are in this day.

4. *Exhortation.* Teach and instruct your Children, so soon as they be capable of it, in the right knowledge and understanding of the Covenant. As the Lord hath honoured you, in taking you and your Children into Covenant, you ought to be much in explaining and unfolding the Priviledges and Duties of it to your Children. This is one of (the *Magnalia*) the great things that God hath written in his Word, *viz.* that we our selves and off-spring should be well versed in, and acquainted

quainted with. This is one great way to discover the high esteem that you have of the Covenant, for your selves and Children, when you take delight to study to arrive unto a good understanding of it, and carefully to instruct and teach your Children the knowledge of it. *Timothy* had Conscientious Parents, or Parent that did so teach and instruct him, that when he was very little, he was well acquainted with the Scriptures, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. Many there be that are very desirous to have their Children to be Baptized, and to partake of the Seal of the Covenant; but little make it their work and business to admonish and instruct their Children, suitable to that Relative Duty, which they stand under the obligation of to their poor Children. One great reason why many (as I find) do renounce and reject the Seal of the Covenant, is, because they were never well instructed into the knowledge of it, nor the Duties they were bound unto the performance of, by the Seal of it. Few Parents (no not some that have the root of the matter in them) do take that care, as they are bound to do, to inform their Children into the Gospel-administration of the Covenant, since the time of the Incarnation and Ascension of the *Messiah*, and to shew the parallel that there is between the Covenant first openly establish'd with the *Jews* and their Seed, and now with the *Gentiles* and their Seed. Wherefoever the Gospel is sent (by Divine Conduct) unto any place, and Preach'd, that never had the Beams of its Glorious Light shining before; there those that believe and repent must be Baptized, and their Children with them, and enter into the Covenant together; for saith the Apostle, *The promise is to you and your children, and to those that are afar off, and even to as many as the Lord shall call. The promise*, viz. the Covenant, *is to*

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you and your children; ay, and ſo it ſhall be with thoſe that are afar off, even the poor Children of the *Gentiles*, ſo many as the Lord ſhall call, they with their believing Parents ſhall be received into Covenant with the Lord; *Acts* 2. 38, 39.

I ſhall conclude all with one word of *Exhortation*, unto ungodly and unconverted Sinners: It is to exhort them in the name and fear of the Lord, that they would convert, repent and turn unto the Lord. To Repent is one of the great Doctrines that is charged upon us in our Commiſſions to Preach to, and urge ſeverely upon Men. *John the Baptiſt* did much fill up his Miniſtry, in calling upon thoſe that did at any time attend upon it, to *repent*. Our bleſſed Lord began his Miniſtry in ſounding out the ſame Doctrine. This is a Doctrine, that we that Preach the Goſpel, ought to be ſolemn and inſtant in. How happy would it be, if there were no other contention among Miniſters than this, for every one to ſtrive to bring moſt Souls to Faith and Repentance? It may be matter of lamentation, to ſee how many take upon them the Work of the Miniſtry; ſuch that I fear, though they make nothing to condemn and diſannul the Miniſtry of others, are ſcarce able to prove their own Call thereunto; how they labour abundantly more to proſelyte their followers to their Opinions, than to obtain Converts to Chriſt. But to cloſe all; I do here intreat and beg all that hear me, that be yet out of Chriſt, impenitent Sinners, to repent and turn to God, and take hold upon the Covenant, and the rare Bleſſings and Promiſes of it; and for your encouragement, *The promiſe ſhall be unto you, and your children.* You and yours will be taken into this Covenant: If you are not in it already, what will you ſtand, and ſtout it out againſt God, under the precious means of Grace, and the rich

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tenders of the Gospel proposed unto you? and to labour to ruine your selves and Children for ever, so far as you can? After all the terrible threatnings of the Word that have been defeated by you, oh let not this be rejected, but let it melt your Hearts into Repentance: This (I say of my Text) *The promise is to you, and your children. Amen.*

FINIS.